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Asia-Pacific Perspectives is a key publication of CTPECC and an open forum welcoming submissions of analyses, perspectives, and commentaries on the Asia-Pacific region. The newsletter focuses on political, economic and social issues.

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# Asia-Pacific Perspectives

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# Prospects for Trump's Trade Policy in 2018

*Eric Chiou*

This past January, numerous global leaders and business elites gathered at the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland, to share their insights on global economic trends.

Among the various subjects of media attention, US President Donald Trump's speech no doubt drew the most press, given that US trade policy under his administration has been seen as one of the crucial factors affecting global economic stability.

Indeed, since his inauguration in January 2017, international society has been haunted by the gloomy prospect of an upcoming "trade war," together with anxiety over the uncertainty surrounding Trump's trade policy.

As advocates of globalization and liberal economists fretted about the possible consequences of Trump's economic nationalist rhetoric and his apparent "anti-globalization" proclivities, these supporters of free trade applauded Chinese President Xi Jinping in Davos last year when he delivered remarks firmly defending economic globalization. Xi framed himself as a savior of market mechanisms and global free trade, and positioned China as the last guardian of the existing global economic order.

Despite Xi's rhetoric, there was no apparent seismic shift in the global economic order over the first year of Trump's presidency, nor were the most pessimistic predictions of liberal economists borne out. The global economy

grew 3.7% in 2017, and global growth is expected to increase to 3.9% in 2018, according to the IMF's January 2018 forecast.

However, the lingering shadows of trade protectionism and an upcoming trade war have not disappeared. Indeed, the Trump administration last year began an investigation under Section 301 of the US's Trade Act into alleged violations of intellectual property rights by China. And this past January, Washington imposed steep tariffs on Chinese solar panels and South Korean washing machines under Section 201 of the act.

Many experts who earlier predicted the outbreak of a trade war saw the record-high US trade deficit in 2017-signifying a heavy slap in the face of the Trump administration's efforts to reduce it-as a main potential motivating factor. As a result, Trump's address in Davos became particularly important, given the profound global economic implications of US trade policy guided by Trump.

In front of a pro-globalization audience in Davos, Trump's speech did not deviate from his "America First" rhetoric, but did deliver a pro-business message, proclaiming: "America is open for business, and we are competitive once again."

In other words, what he intended to impress upon his audience in Davos is that the US has become a more business-friendly environment under his administration. And "America First" certainly does not mean "America Alone" or isolationism as some skeptics claim.

In terms of trade policy, Trump pointed out that Washington aims to reform the international trade system in order to promote shared prosperity and reward countries who abide by trade rules. He asserted that the US supports free trade, but that "it needs to be fair and it needs to be reciprocal."

Trump also warned that the US will "no longer turn a blind eye to unfair economic practices," such as "massive intellectual property theft, industrial



subsidies and pervasive state-led economic planning."

In the interview, Trump claimed that he would reconsider the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) if he could strike a "substantially better deal." Trump also vowed to enforce US trade laws and restore the integrity of the US-led trading system, insisting that fair and free trade would benefit all countries, not just the US. The takeaway was that the US is prepared to sign mutually beneficial bilateral trade pacts with other countries.

From Trump's aforementioned statements, it seems problematic to accuse Trump of being "anti-free trade" or promoting "trade protectionism" purely on the basis of his overweening economic nationalist rhetoric and his prioritization of so-called "American interests."

Essentially, trade protectionist states display the following characteristics: First, they deliberately utilize various policy instruments, such as high tariffs and non-tariff barriers, to discourage imports from other countries and protect their markets and domestic industries.

Second, they intentionally adopt industrial policies, subsidies for export-oriented industries, exchange rate manipulation, and other measures to promote exports and facilitate national development. The ultimate goal of these measures is generally to obtain a massive trade surplus while accumulating foreign reserves to bolster national wealth.

Under these standards, it would be difficult to classify the United States as a trade protectionist state, given its gaping trade deficit of US\$810 billion in 2017. China, Mexico, and Japan are the three countries carrying the highest trade surpluses with the US, with China's surplus alone accounting for nearly half of the US's total trade deficit. It is therefore unsurprising that Xi rejected any "trade protectionism" that may alter the status quo favoring Beijing.

**6** Two broadly-used measures of trade protectionism are tariff and non-

tariff barriers. According to the WTO, the average tariff rate in the US was 3.5% in 2016, much lower than China's 9.9%, South Korea's 13.9%, India's 13.4%, Mexico's 7%, and the EU's 5.2%.

While the WTO allows developing countries to impose higher tariffs for the purpose of protecting their domestic markets, some developing countries disregard the WTO principles of non-discrimination and the free market to take advantage of these allowances. It seems hypocritical for these countries to portray themselves as resolute believers in free trade and to denounce others for trade protectionism.

As for non-tariff measures, the US has a lower prevalence score, coverage ratio, and frequency index than China, the EU, and Japan, according to data from UNCTAD. In other words, to crown the US as a trade protectionist state ignores the fact that other major trading countries have gone farther than the US in adopting unfair trade practices which violate WTO principles.

On the other hand, recent developments in US trade policy have rightly triggered widespread concerns. For instance, in March, Trump decided to impose a 25% tariff on steel and a 10% tariff on aluminum, a decision which met with immediate resistance from his Republican Party and from US allies, who worry that the imposition of tariffs is likely to trigger retaliatory measures by affected countries and possibly pave the way for a full-blown trade war.

Given the rising tide of US trade protectionism, there are other reasons for many countries to be worried about Trump's trade policy. First, the US remains one of the largest consumer markets in the world, with exports from many states directly or indirectly reliant on the US market.

Second, the US plays an irreplaceable role in the global system, with more transparent and easier market access than other countries. If Washington



were to initiate tariff barriers across all categories without exemption, many states would suffer and retaliate, a scenario which would likely escalate into a full-blown trade war with grave implications for the global economy.

Third, given that the US continues to play a crucial role in global upstream supply chains and in consumer markets, if Trump succeeds in twisting global supply chains by moving manufacturing back to the US and reshaping the global trade system, those countries enjoying excessive trade benefits from the existing trade system may lose their advantages in global competition.

Thus, it suits countries with vested interests in the current system to maintain this imbalanced system and to thwart, resist, and deny any appeals for reform from the US. As a result, tensions between the reform-oriented US and proponents of the status quo are likely to continue.

After a 2017 in which Trump's trade policy secured no concrete achievements but revealed his proclivities for bragging, flip-flopping, and bluffing in cases including the US's withdrawal from the TPP, threatened trade sanctions against China and Mexico, and renegotiation of NAFTA and the US-Korea FTA, the year of 2018 is a critical time for examining whether Trump's trade policy can actually lead to substantial changes in the world economic system.

Due to various political and economic factors, the Trump administration will be forced to adopt tougher trade policies this year, a trend foreshadowed by the US's recently announced tariffs on steel and aluminum. We can expect that with the US midterm congressional elections coming up in November, Trump may utilize a more aggressive trade policy to rally his supporters and to boost his low approval rating.

Externally, Trump's trade policy of appeasement toward China in exchange for the latter's cooperation last year on the North Korean nuclear

issue may also change in response to recent developments. Now, there are indications that the Trump administration may disengage Chinese trade from the US pursuit of North Korean denuclearization. Such a move might signal that Trump intends to adopt more hostile trade measures against China, in order to compel more substantial concessions.

We can therefore expect that Trump's trade policy will develop in the following directions. First, the US will utilize its trade laws more frequently and pervasively, targeting its major trading partners with huge bilateral trade surpluses while initiating investigations and imposing trade sanctions as threats to win concessions.

Second, the US will take a more aggressive approach to reforming the WTO and its existing mode of operation. If it cannot obtain agreeable responses, Washington will move to resist, deny and undermine the legitimacy of the WTO.

Third, the US will strongly compel its trading partners to further open their domestic markets to American goods and services, and to enforce protections on US intellectual property rights.

Finally, the US will continue to adopt an unyielding posture in multilateral trade negotiations like NAFTA, and will use tariffs as extra bargaining chips in such talks. As for the TPP, there is uncertainty on whether the US will return soon, given the lack of clarity on whether the 11 countries to have signed the revised agreement will agree on Washington's terms for renegotiation.

In the end, Trump's threatened tariffs may not only harm and alienate the US's trading partners, but also prove self-destructive, making it more likely that these tariffs remain a rhetorical tactic to be used in trade negotiations rather than as a policy to incite total trade war. However, given Trump's unpredictable personality, even the imposition of tariffs on certain products



could quickly escalate into a destructive trade war. Until the US makes progress in cutting its trade deficit and reforming the global trading system, the outlook for global trade in 2018 will remain turbulent and unstable.

*(Eric Chiou is an Associate Professor in International Political Economy at National Chiao Tung University)*

# **Implications for the Promotion of Sustainable and Inclusive Growth at APEC 2018**

*Wayne Chen*

As Papua New Guinea hosts APEC for the first time this year, APEC member economies are conducting in-depth discussions on a group of priority issues in order to plan their works for the year. Under the theme of "Harnessing Inclusive Opportunities, Embracing the Digital Future," APEC this year has for the first time elevated the internet and digital economy to a central topic, and has linked it together with the issue of inclusive growth which emerged as a focus in APEC 2017. This annual theme reflects the organization's continued promotion of the APEC Leaders' Growth Strategy of 2010, as well as its expansion under the APEC Strategy for Strengthening Quality Growth (2015) in support of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and other overarching initiatives.

Prompted by the central themes of inclusion and the internet economy, APEC 2018 has defined three main priority areas, namely "improving connectivity and deepening regional economic integration," "promoting inclusive and sustainable growth," and "strengthening economic growth through structural reform." These priorities together reflect Papua New Guinea's promotion of plans for connectivity and structural reforms that can further regional cooperation on the core goal of inclusive and sustainable growth.



## **Inclusive Growth as a Key Focus of Asia-Pacific and International Cooperation**

The deliverables achieved at APEC 2017 show that inclusive growth has already become a key focus of economic cooperation among APEC economies, who continue to pursue that goal by increasing inclusiveness in their economies, societies, and financial planning.

APEC's pursuit of inclusive growth first became apparent in 2010 with the APEC Leaders' Growth Strategy, which emphasizes the need during economic recovery for the international community to pursue not just growth in economic indicators, but also to consider the quality of growth. In other words, growth should be balanced, inclusive, sustainable, innovative, and secure. In 2015, to advance the Leaders' Growth Strategy, APEC released its Strategy for Strengthening Quality Growth, which seeks to strengthen cooperation with other international organizations on related issues. For example, much of what APEC has done on this issue has incorporated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly on eliminating poverty and hunger, advancing hygiene and sanitation, increasing investment in digital infrastructure, cutting environmental pollution, and ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns.

APEC 2018 has also incorporated a number of projects under the UN Sustainable Development Goals that relate to APEC's own growth strategy and broader policy goals. This year's sessions will also discuss the increasingly important topics of what will carry the Bogor Goals forward after 2020, including discussions on the digital economy and on renewing its growth strategy. In this vein, the priority area of sustainable and inclusive growth will involve 3 important issues: (1) promoting sustainable and inclusive development through corporate social responsibility; (2) gender inclusion; and (3) promoting food security.

## **Implications for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth**

### *1. Promoting Sustainable and Inclusive Growth*

APEC 2018 will discuss how to promote and share best practices on sustainability, measurability and transparency in order to ensure that resources are used for the greatest possible economic benefit while reducing negative effects on the environment and leaving resources intact for future generations. Topics under discussion will include responsible resource management for the fishing, forestry, agriculture, energy, mining and tourism sectors, among others. APEC is also broadening private sector participation, strengthening public-private partnerships and promoting corporate social responsibility initiatives.

On corporate social responsibility, governments have undertaken to use regulations and partner with business in promoting good practices and governance to ensure sustainable use of resources, to secure equal opportunity, and to share the fruits of economic development, especially among women, youth, the disabled, indigenous groups and others who are less advantaged.

### *2. Gender Inclusion*

Economic growth has already helped lift millions out of poverty, but women and other less advantaged groups still lack equal opportunity, and there is still a wealth gap between those in urban and rural areas. APEC 2018 will discuss inclusion as an approach to ensure that "no one is left behind" by the ongoing wave of globalization. As the role of women in contributing to regional economic development has already been widely acknowledged,



APEC will continue to promote the work of gender mainstreaming in order to increase women's empowerment, to help women realize their potential, and to push for regional economic integration.

### *3. Promoting Food Security*

APEC members and countries all over the world take seriously the issue of food security, as demonstrated in the second UN Sustainable Development Goal of "end[ing] hunger, achiev[ing] food security and improved nutrition and promot[ing] sustainable agriculture." APEC leaders have announced their intention to promote sustainable agriculture, food security, forest management, fishing and aquaculture to protect natural resources, while also approving communications equipment and other related technological innovations to improve regional food security.

Aside from its ongoing promotion of the APEC Food Security Road Map towards 2020, APEC has also drafted the APEC Multi-year Action Plan on Food Security and Climate Change and the APEC Action Plan on Rural-Urban Development to Strengthen Food Security and Quality Growth, the initiatives of which are officially to come into effect in 2018. APEC member economies will draft their own food security action plans in line with these proposals, and will discuss possible technological and digital approaches for meeting their designated roles on the issue of food security.

## **Expected Outcomes**

### *1. Promoting Sustainable and Inclusive Growth*

a focus on natural resource management agencies, including those related to forestry, agriculture, fishing, mining, and tourism; second, to increase opportunities for MSMEs to access the global value chains; and third, to submit policy proposals on promoting inclusive and sustainable resource development to APEC economic Leaders, Ministers, and senior officials.

## *2. Gender Inclusion*

First, to use sector-specific approaches to promote gender inclusivity and women's economic empowerment; second, to create models to drive gender inclusion and female economic empowerment, including through a focus on ideal gender roles for men; third, to promote proposals on healthy women and healthy economies, especially those relating to healthy workplaces and safety; and fourth, to promote discussions on women and the digital age.

## *3. Promoting Food Security*

First, to promote sustainable fishery management and smart agriculture to increase food security; second, to promote discussions of women in agricultural agencies to increase food security; third, to start the first stage of the APEC Multi-year Action Plan on Food Security; and fourth, to submit policy proposals on promoting fisheries management, smart agriculture, and promotion of food security to APEC leaders, ministers, and senior ministers.

## **Observations and Recommendations**

An overall look at the priority areas of promoting sustainable and inclusive growth reveals that these implications are closely linked to many issues important to Taiwan. In the field of sustainable and inclusive growth,



energy security is one of the most pressing issues facing Taiwan, which is working on energy-smart communities, financing for renewable energy, and energy security. As the current chair of the Energy Working Group, Taiwan can wield significant influence on these issues.

On gender inclusion, Taiwan is in the position of being an opinion leader on this issue, especially since APEC 2017, when Taiwan joined with the US and Australia to launch the APEC Women and the Economy Sub-fund. The establishment of this sub-fund further demonstrates the lead that Taiwan is taking on gender mainstreaming and women economy. Aside from its promotion of the issue of gender mainstreaming within APEC, Taiwan also has plenty of room for progress on women's economic empowerment, women's education, and women's inclusion in the workplace.

On the issue of food security, Taiwan is pushing the APEC Multi-Year Project on Strengthening Public-Private Partnerships to Reduce Food Losses in the Supply Chain, which has already completed several theoretical studies and yielded useful tools. This important project is not just a means of realizing multiple large-scale APEC proposals, it is a direct way of supporting the UN Sustainable Development Goals. However, it is necessary on each issue to pay attention to the related issue of corporate responsibility, for the main reason that this issue has been neglected in the past. When corporate social responsibility has been brought up in the relatively closed-off mining sector, and when it was discussed at ABAC, corporate representatives challenged its definition, implications for and relevance to economic development, showing that the private sector is still wary of this topic and that there is a need to explore it with extra care within APEC.

*(Wayne Chen is an Associate Research Fellow at the Taiwan Institute of Economic Research)*

# **Examining the Global Rise of Women's Economic Empowerment Through Recent Developments in WTO and APEC**

*Tzuying Chen*

For the first time in their collective history, the members and observers of the World Trade Organization, gathered at the 11<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference held this past December in Buenos Aires, Argentina, endorsed a program aimed at increasing women's participation in trade. The "Buenos Aires Declaration on Women and Trade" is intended to contribute to the fulfillment of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, the fifth of which is gender equality.

Canada, Iceland and Sierra Leone led the push to pass the Buenos Aires Declaration on Women and Trade, which gained the support of a large majority of WTO members. Under the declaration, member countries agreed to analyze their national policies from the perspective of gender, and to search for ways to increase women's participation in the global economy. Members also undertook to ensure that trade-related assistance focuses more on its implications for women, and to report their progress on these fronts in 2019.

Moreover, members agreed to further share their experience with plans and policies on women's economic participation, to exchange best practices based on analyses of gender issues in trade policy, to assemble indicators relevant to the topic, to discuss control and assessment methods, and to analyze trade data related to gender, all for the overall purpose of removing



obstacles to women's economic participation.

Before the declaration was released, there had already been several recent regional and bilateral trade pacts that included clauses relevant to differing economic participation along gender lines. Bilateral trade agreements between Chile and Canada, Chile and Uruguay, and Chile and the EU, as well as planned negotiations by Canada on NAFTA, all incorporated new language on gender. While previous trade agreements had sought to address gender issues by means of human rights assessments and various specialized criteria, the appearance of specific language on gender and trade in these agreements symbolized that the importance of gender issues would now be on par with other economic and trade topics, and signaled that the signing of future trade agreements would increasingly take into account the potential implications of those agreements for gender welfare and participation.

In light of these developments, and in order to accommodate the growing influence of gender mainstreaming as a policymaking approach, the International Gender Champions Trade Impact Group (TIG), as a subsidiary organization of the WTO, moved to hold discussions on the relationship between trade and gender, which in turn contributed to the WTO's first-ever proclamation on an issue dealing with women and trade. This progress has helped elucidate the relationship between gender equality and economic competitiveness, while simultaneously providing WTO members with a framework and platform on which to further advance an inclusive trade agenda.

Though the Buenos Aires Declaration on Women and Trade gained the support of a large majority of WTO members, it was not affirmed by a number of countries, including the US, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Venezuela, and India, the last of which argued that gender issues lay

outside the scope of the WTO. Moreover, progress in the WTO Ministerial Conference stalled on important issues, without reaching consensus on public stockholding for food security or domestic regulation in services, and without issuing any joint statement on the direction, issues, or expected outcomes of the next two years of the Doha Round of trade talks. No mention was made of concrete future steps to be taken on the issue of women, which had previously been a relatively marginal issue at WTO talks, and so it is expected that regional and bilateral trade agreements will continue to steer thinking and policy action on the relationship between women and trade.

In contrast to the very gradual steps on the issue taken by the WTO in its ongoing Doha Round, APEC in recent years has demonstrated positive and steady progress on women's issues. In 2011, APEC economies issued the San Francisco Declaration, which expressed support for women's economic empowerment and stated that actions furthering women's economic empowerment were to be at the heart of APEC leaders' policy strategies for growth. Moreover, the San Francisco Declaration also identified access to financial capital, market access, skills and capacity building, and women's leadership as pillars of a gender mainstreaming approach. The declaration stands as a landmark in APEC's promotion of gender mainstreaming as a future policymaking framework.

In the same year that the San Francisco Declaration announced its commitment to pursuing women's economic empowerment, APEC also moved to alter its organizational structure as part of a positive effort to promote women's issues, merging the Gender Focal Point Network (GFPN) and the Women's Leadership Network (WLN) into the Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy (PPWE). Under this reorganization, APEC has continued to encourage its member economies to develop action plans and proposals that promote the main pillars of gender mainstreaming, and has



helped connect top public representatives with the APEC Business Advisory Council and other related international organizations in a public-private partnership to advance the cause of women's economic empowerment.

To assess APEC's results in its work on women's issues, the APEC Policy Support Unit in 2015 compiled the Women and the Economy Dashboard, which presents 75 different indicators related to women and the economy in order to track and assess the conditions of women's economic participation in each member economy.

2017 was a productive year for APEC in terms of its work on women's issues. The APEC Leaders' Declaration and Joint Ministerial Statement issued in Vietnam late last year positioned digital technology as the next front for capacity-building and high-level skills training programs for women. It is hoped that by strengthening the pillars of gender mainstreaming, these programs can advance gender equality and promote inclusive growth. These projects are also intimately connected with the theme of APEC in Papua New Guinea this year, "Harnessing Inclusive Opportunities, Embracing the Digital Future." Papua New Guinea has proposed that "Promoting Sustainable and Inclusive Growth" be listed as a priority issue for the year, as a means of helping APEC member economies think about how to promote regionally inclusive and sustainable growth. Increasing women's participation in the labor market was specifically listed as a key component of inclusive growth.

## **Conclusion**

Over the past several years, progress in regional and bilateral trade agreements has increasingly focused attention by major international organizations on the relationship between women and trade, culminating in the WTO's first-ever formal declaration on the conflicts between gender

inequality and trade. Heralding a turn toward more inclusive trade, the Buenos Aires Declaration on women's economic participation reflects the clear influence of APEC, which in 2011 began to focus on gender mainstreaming, and in 2015 started to emphasize the topic of inclusive growth. This year's APEC theme and priority action areas not only incorporate a continuing emphasis on the importance of female economic empowerment as a driver of inclusive growth, they also highlight the potential significance of digital technology for women, providing a reference for future action by the WTO on issues of women and trade.

Whether at the WTO or in APEC, Chinese Taipei has consistently demonstrated a positive commitment to taking action on women's issues. During WTO MC11, the Chinese Taipei delegation supported Canada's proposal on women's economic empowerment, and at last year's APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting, Chinese Taipei joined with the US and Australia in launching the APEC Women and the Economy Sub-fund, which will enable APEC to support applications by member economies for projects on women's issues. Through continued emphasis and action on these issues, Chinese Taipei can seize the initiative on the international stage to become an advocate for women across the world.

*(Tzuying Chen is an Assistant Research Fellow at the Taiwan Institute of Economic Research. This article was originally published in the January 2018 edition of the Pacific Business Forum Newsletter, and was translated from the Chinese by Alexander Martin)*



# **Summary Report: 2017 International Conference on Women and Sport - APEC Sports Policy Network (ASPN)**

*Gary Chen*

The "2017 International Conference on Women and Sport" organized by Chinese Taipei was held in Taipei on October 12, 2017, and was attended by 15 government sports officials, experts and athletes from 10 APEC member economies.

The invited speakers included Ms. Natalya Sipovich, chairwoman of the Women and Sports Committee of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA); Ms. Vickie Saunders, founder of The Sponsorship Consultants; Ms. Catherine Raper, Representative of the Australian Office, Taipei; Dr. Andi Rahman, head of International Relations at the Indonesian Ministry of Youth and Sports; Dr. Yoriko Noguchi, head of International Relations at the Japan Sport Council; Ms. Haslina Binti Abdul Hamid, deputy secretary-general of the Malaysian Ministry of Youth and Sports; Ms. Sharon Wee, director and co-founder of Sport Warrior Global; Ms. Janet Gimots, director of the National Sports Institute of Papua New Guinea; Ms. Celia H. Kiram, commissioner of the Philippine Sports Commission; Ms. Peggy Tng, deputy director of the Singapore Sports Institute, Prof. Supitr Samahito, member of the OCA Women and Sports Committee; and Ms. Le Thi Hoang Yen, deputy director-general of the Vietnam Sports Administration. The speakers from Chinese Taipei included Dr. Yu-Hsien Tseng of National Taiwan University;



## Opening Ceremony of the "2017 International Conference on Women and Sport"

Dr. Chiung-Tzu Lucetta Tsai of National Taipei University; Ms. Yi-An Chen, founder of AnnChen Handmade Soap; and Ms. Maggie Hsu, director of the Sports Administration of the Ministry of Education.

The increasing international focus on promoting gender equality has helped draw attention to the question of how to advance the participation of women in sports in line with women's own experiences and needs. The Brighton Declaration in 1994 and the Helsinki Declaration in 2014 both stressed that governments should ensure that institutions and organizations responsible for the development of sports and physical activities offer equal opportunities to men and women and distribute resources without discrimination. Against this background, representatives from all APEC economies gathered in Taipei to discuss the development of women's sports through education policy, and how public-private-partnerships might serve to increase women's participation and visibility in sports.



## **Cultivating women's sports habits through education policy**

Social expectations and stereotypes in many Asian economies discourage women's participation in sports and their development of related habits. According to a survey conducted by the Indonesian Ministry of Youth and Sports, one out of four Indonesian citizens exercise regularly, but most of those who do are male. To improve the situation, government organizations in Indonesia are promoting the benefits of regular exercise and encouraging women to participate in sports through mass media initiatives. Authorities in Indonesia have also launched programs to train women as sports administrators and managers.

Earlier this year, officials from Chinese Taipei published a "Women's Sports Participation Advocacy White Paper," with the aims of nurturing healthy women, empowering women through sports, and building a sports environment friendly to women. The white paper, as a blueprint for engaging women in sports, proposes a 10-year program to boost women's sports participation and achieve gender equality in the field by using mass media outlets to foster more positive attitudes about engagement.

Malaysia, for its part, has adopted a "One Student One Sport" policy together with other initiatives designed to ensure that all students, including and especially female students, have access to sports and develop sports habits in the early stages of their lives. The Philippines, in contrast, is seeking to improve sports participation among female students using equal incentives and sports scholarships. Several women-only programs like the "Women's Martial Arts Event" and the "Inter Government Agency Female Sports Festival" were also launched in the Philippines to bring women together through participation in physical activity and sports.

In Vietnam, the Women and Sports Commission, as a dedicated

government agency, collaborates with the Vietnam Olympic Committee (VOC) to deliver positive press about women in sports, and to ensure that women have access to sports. The outstanding international sporting achievements of female Vietnamese athletes, together with incentives provided by the country's authorities, have encouraged more Vietnamese women to take up sports themselves. Papua New Guinea, for its part, has posted considerable progress in terms of encouraging women's participation in sport. Its success in hosting the U20 Women's World Cup has motivated more women there to play sports and has boosted their confidence to succeed in sporting disciplines. There are also examples of women in Papua New Guinea who have taken up important positions in the field of sports.

### **Public-private partnership to increase women's participation and visibility in sports**

Women's participation in sports is influenced by many factors. Perhaps the most important factor is that many women come under pressure to prioritize family affairs, and as a result forego opportunities to participate in sports. A friendly sports environment is another key to boosting women's willingness to take part in sports, which in turn can help women gain confidence at home and in the workplace. Lastly, conventional career planning for women also serves as a barrier to participation. For these reasons, a public-private partnership may serve as an important means by which to increase women's participation in sports and strengthen the link between women and sports. For instance, the "Athlete Career Program," a cooperative program between the Chinese Taipei Olympic Committee and Adecco, aims to provide co-marketing services in athlete career development in order to help retired athletes cultivate skills for a new career. Through this



program, former taekwondo fighter Yi-An Chen started a new career running a handmade soap business after retiring from martial arts competition. It is hoped that the availability of such resources will convince more women to participate in sports.

Japanese authorities are now working with figures in the country's business sector to provide a flexible environment in which women can work and compete in sports at the same time. This year in Japan saw the launch of Premium Sport Friday, a program under which employees are allowed to work shorter hours on Fridays in order to participate in sporting events with their families. The Singapore Sports Hub initiative, set up under the Singapore Sports Council's Vision 2030 ("Living Better through Sports"), aims to develop a Silicon Valley of Sports, with extensive facilities, sports halls and green spaces for both leisure and non-sports-related entertainment that can let entire families, including women, participate in sports activities.

The Australian government strongly supports female empowerment and gender equality, both domestically and internationally. Through sponsorship, as well as through commercial, personal and social development initiatives, Australia is working to increase the presence of women in the sports world. For example, sponsorships can help female athletes in various ways, such as by letting them serve as company ambassadors, pursue marketing and customer engagement, and build relationships with charities to create value for both athletes and their sponsors, generating social impacts that go beyond sports. These sponsorships let more female athletes serve as potential role models for women, and help encourage more women to participate in sports.

International sports organizations have also been active in furthering women's participation in sports. The Olympic Council of Asia established a Women and Sport Committee in 2003, which was charged with the responsibility of assisting in the development of women's activities at the

Asian Games and cooperating with existing sports organizations to foster and promote the values of sports among women. In addition, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has made great progress in promoting gender equality in sports. Its "Olympics Agenda 2020" has set a target of 50 percent female participation in the Olympics and Asian Games, a goal which is to be pursued at international sporting events of all levels. Last but not least, continuing dialogue and cooperation within the APEC community is also helping raise awareness on the issue of promoting women's engagement in sports, and promises more opportunities for women to take leadership roles in sports administration in the region.

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