



CHINA

CITIZENS CALL FOR A GENDER-EQUAL WORLD: A ROADMAP FOR ACTION¹



READ THE REPORT



WHAT DO RESPONDENTS IN CHINA THINK ABOUT GENDER EQUALITY?

- ➔ **Gender equality is personally important to 89 percent of female respondents in China and 78 percent of their male counterparts.** Fifty-five percent of female respondents say that gender equality is *“very important”* to them. Only three percent of respondents in China think gender equality is unimportant.
- ➔ Most respondents in China think that gender equality is better now than it was 25 years ago. Seventy-two percent of female respondents and 61 percent of their male counterparts think that things have gotten better. Twenty-seven percent of respondents think that gender equality is the same, and five percent think it is worse.
- ➔ **Sixty percent of respondents in China think that the government should do more to promote gender equality.** Thirty percent think it should do *“a lot more”* and 30 percent want *“a bit more.”*
- ➔ **Forty percent of respondents in China want the government to *“reform laws to promote equality between women and men and end discrimination against women.”* Forty percent also want the government to *“implement mass media campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of gender equality issues.”* Of the proposed measures, only one percent of respondents in China think the government should do none of them and not try to advance gender equality.**
- ➔ In terms of reasons why women and men may not be equal in China, the most widely held reason is *“because women and men have different employment opportunities”* (39 percent). Thirty-two percent of respondents think that it is *“because boys and girls are treated differently growing up,”* as well as 32 percent who think that *“the unequal division of unpaid care and domestic work”* is a main reason.

¹ This country data sheet captures findings from a public perception survey on gender equality for China. This work is co-led by Focus 2030 and Women Deliver. The survey was executed through an online poll, conducted by Deltapoll, in 17 countries. Approximately one thousand respondents in each country were surveyed in July/August 2020. Demographic data collected included: gender, age, income level, education level, last vote in national elections (where applicable), ethnicity (where applicable), migrant status, and region of residency. In China, 1,013 respondents were surveyed, including 495 female respondents, 517 male respondents, and 1 respondent who identified “in another way”, and zero respondents who identified “in another way.” Of the 1,013 respondents, 162 were aged 18 to 24, 468 were aged 25 to 44, 290 were aged 45 to 59, and 93 were aged 60 and older. Please see www.focus2030.org and www.womensdeliver.org for more information.

² Text in italics and quotes reflect survey response options presented to respondents.



WOMEN'S ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND RIGHTS

- ➔ **Promoting women's economic justice and rights is ranked as the top issue the government of China should focus on to advance gender equality**, as 22 percent of respondents choose *"implement access to well paid jobs, equal pay, financial independence, and property rights"* as their top priority. Sixty-one percent choose the issue as a top-three priority.
- ➔ **The most popular measure to improve women's broader economic opportunities and decision-making powers is to "achieve equal access to education and professional training for women and men" (41 percent). Thirty-nine percent of respondents think the government should "achieve equal pay for women and men," and 35 percent think the government should "recognize, reduce, and redistribute unpaid care and domestic work between women and men."**
- ➔ Twenty-eight percent of female respondents in China say that they have *"not had the same access to promotion opportunities in [their] job as male peers,"* and 24 percent say they are *"not paid as much as [their] male counterparts at work."* Female respondents in China have also *"had difficulty accessing education and professional training compared to [their] male peers"* (23 percent). Sixteen percent *"have not received or will not receive the same inheritance as [their] male relatives."*
- ➔ In China, 19 percent of female respondents say that they have had their *"freedom of movement restricted against [their] will by family members or a partner,"* rising to 23 percent among female respondents aged 18 to 24.
- ➔ A majority of respondents in China (54 percent) think it is *"unacceptable"* to *"let women do the majority of housework, childcare, and elderly care."* Only 21 percent think this would be *"acceptable."* Furthermore, only 25 percent of respondents think it is *"acceptable"* to *"ask a woman during a job interview whether she has, or would like to have, children."* Sixteen percent of respondents in China think it is *"acceptable"* *"that women earn less than men for the same work,"* and 63 percent think this is *"unacceptable."*
- ➔ During the Covid-19 pandemic, 24 percent of female respondents say that they *"could not do as many hours of paid work as [they] usually would"* and 20 percent say that they *"have faced unexpected financial hardship."* Coupled with this, 47 percent of female respondents in China report that their *"time doing household work has increased,"* and 31 percent report their *"time dedicated to the care of others has increased."*



FEMINIST MOVEMENTS AND LEADERSHIP

- ➔ **Feminist movements and leadership is the second priority selected overall**, as 18 percent choose *"improve women's participation and leadership in politics, and cultural and social movements"* as their top priority. Fifty-seven percent choose the issue as a top-three priority.
- ➔ **The most popular measure to increase women's leadership is to "achieve equal representation of women in politics" (41 percent overall, 44 percent among female respondents).**
- ➔ **A strong majority (69 percent) agree that "imposing gender quotas" in political decision-making bodies is an effective way to advance gender equality in China. Only seven percent disagree.**



GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- ➔ **Ending gender-based violence is the third most selected priority**, as 18 percent choose “*end violence against women*” as their top priority. Fifty-three percent choose the issue as a top-three priority.
- ➔ **The most popular of the proposed measures to address gender-based violence in China is to “increase accountability for [perpetrators of] physical and sexual crimes against women” (55 percent).** Also popular are measures to “*address the unequal balance of power between women and men at home within families, marriages, and relationships*” (51 percent) and to “*tackle online violence against women*” (40 percent). Only two percent of respondents think the government should do none of the proposed measures and should not work to fight violence against women.
- ➔ **Sixty-six percent of female respondents in China feel at risk, or know someone who feels at risk, of assault or harassment in some place or another.** Forty-three percent of female respondents indicate this is true in “*public spaces,*” and 42 percent mention this is true “*online.*” A further 14 percent of them feel at risk, or know someone who feels at risk, of assault or harassment in “*their home.*”
- ➔ Seventy-four percent of respondents in China think it is “*unacceptable*” to “*whistle at a woman in the street or touch her without consent.*” Sixty-seven percent of respondents think it is “*unacceptable*” for women to “*always obey their partner.*” However, 43 percent also think it is “*unacceptable*” for a woman to “*refuse sexual intercourse with her partner.*” This view is more commonly held by male respondents and older respondents.



TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION FOR GENDER EQUALITY

- ➔ **Technology and innovation for gender equality is the fourth most selected priority**, as 15 percent choose “*invest in technology to improve women’s access to health services, education, and economic opportunities*” as their top priority. Forty-nine percent choose the issue as a top-three priority.
- ➔ **To promote the use of technology and innovation for gender equality, 50 percent of respondents in China want the government to “increase the safety of digital spaces for girls and women” and 50 percent think the government should “provide equal opportunities for girls and women to study and work in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics).”**
- ➔ Only three percent of respondents do not support any of the prompted measures and do not think the government should promote the use of technology and innovation for gender equality.



BODILY AUTONOMY AND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

- ➔ **Bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights is the fifth most cited priority**, as 13 percent choose “provide access to contraception and family planning, good maternal health, and sex education in schools” as their top priority. Thirty-seven percent choose the issue as a top-three priority
- ➔ **The most popular measure to improve women’s sexual and reproductive health and rights in China is to “increase access to sexual health services” (43 percent).** Also popular are measures to “increase youth engagement in the implementation of sexual and reproductive health services” (42 percent) and to “prioritize the needs of women from marginalized groups (for example, women with disabilities, ethnic minorities, LGBT+ individuals, refugees, and migrants)” (40 percent). Only one percent of respondents in China think the government should do none of the proposed measures and should not improve women’s rights to sexual and reproductive health.
- ➔ Twenty-one percent of female respondents in China have “had difficulty accessing their chosen method of contraception.” This rises to 24 percent among female respondents aged 25 to 44. Additionally, 11 percent of female respondents have “had difficulty accessing abortion and/or post-abortion care.”
- ➔ Just during the Covid-19 pandemic, 10 percent of female respondents in China state that they have “had difficulty accessing abortion and/or post-abortion care” and 11 percent have “had difficulty accessing contraception or other sexual health services.”



FEMINIST ACTION FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

- ➔ **Feminist action for climate justice is the sixth most often cited priority**, as eight percent choose “promote women’s participation in climate change action” as their top priority. Twenty-six percent choose the issue as a top-three priority.
- ➔ **To promote women’s efforts to respond to climate change, 47 percent of respondents in China want the government to “address girls’ and women’s needs in climate change and natural disaster response.”** Similarly, 47 percent think the government should “promote the training and hiring of women in jobs related to climate change.” Also popular, 46 percent think the government should “increase girls’ and women’s participation in the development of solutions to tackle climate change.”
- ➔ Only four percent of respondents do not support any of the prompted measures and do not think the government should promote women’s efforts in response to climate change.



FINANCING FOR GENDER EQUALITY

- ➔ **Three in four respondents (75 percent) think the government should “increase its funding for gender equality in China.”** Only three percent do not think the government should do this. Similarly, 74 percent want the government to “increase its funding for international projects and organizations fighting for gender equality around the world.”
- ➔ Respondents in China see a link between gender equality and economic prosperity, as 72 percent believe that achieving gender equality is essential to end poverty in all countries.



WHAT ACTIONS ARE RESPONDENTS IN CHINA WILLING TO TAKE?

- ➔ In China, 41 percent of respondents are willing to “share information about gender equality on social media” to encourage policymakers to tackle gender inequality around the world. Forty-one percent also say that they would “promote gender equality in everyday conversations and interactions.”
- ➔ Thirty-one percent of respondents would “volunteer with an organization working on gender equality,” and 28 percent would “make a donation to an organization working on gender equality.”
- ➔ Twenty-seven percent of respondents would “purchase or boycott products from companies based on their views on gender equality.” Thirteen percent say that they would “take part in a demonstration or join a movement.”



IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

- ➔ The Covid-19 pandemic in China seems to have affected female respondents more than male respondents in some ways. Thirty-six percent of female respondents report having “experienced emotional stress or mental health issues during the pandemic” (compared to 30 percent of male respondents). This rises among female respondents aged 18 to 24 to 53 percent.
- ➔ Female respondents have also had greater difficulty “accessing medical treatments, medicines, health, and hygiene supplies” (24 percent) compared to male respondents (18 percent).
- ➔ In relation to Covid-19 and gender equality, most respondents (74 percent) “agree” that “the government’s response to support people through the Covid-19 pandemic in China has met the needs of women and men equally.” Similarly, most respondents (78 percent) “agree” that “women should be involved in all aspects of the global health response and recovery efforts to Covid-19, including in the development of policies and treatments.” Twenty-five percent of respondents in China think that “inequality between women and men will rise as a consequence of Covid-19.”

This country data sheet is a supplement to *Citizens Call for a Gender-Equal World: A Roadmap for Action*, a global report on the findings from a 17-country public perception survey on gender equality. For the full report and all country data sheets, please visit: www.focus2030.org and <http://womendeliver.org/citizens-call-for-a-gender-equal-world/>.