1. Please provide information about the forced sterilisation of women who have had one child and become pregnant again in Fuqing, Fujian, China.

Forced sterilisation of women is not a government policy and whilst there have been instances reported, there is no indication that it is a widespread practice. The population and family planning regulations for Fujian province do not require the compulsory sterilisation of a couple who have one child and become pregnant with a second child. However, the regulations state that those who have out-of-plan pregnancies should take “remedial action” in time, without disclosing what constitutes remedial action nor quantifying the time period. Concurrently, there are post-2005 reports of forced sterilisations occurring in Fujian.

Family planning is set out at the national level through the Population and Family Planning Law of the People’s Republic of China 2002 and implemented at the provincial level. The US Department of State Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2009 – China discusses the pressure upon local birth-planning officials to meet birth targets set by government regulations and states that:

The law prohibits the use of physical coercion to compel persons to submit to abortion or sterilization. However, intense pressure to meet birth limitation targets set by government regulations resulted in instances of local birth-planning officials using physical coercion to meet government goals. Such practices required the use of birth-control methods (particularly intrauterine devices and female sterilization, which according to government statistics accounted for more than 80 percent of birth-control methods employed) and the abortion of certain pregnancies.

In the case of families that already had two children, one parent was often pressured to undergo sterilization. The penalties sometimes left women with little practical choice but to undergo abortion or sterilization.

… Several provinces--Anhui, Hebei, Heilongjiang, Hubei, Hunan, Jilin, Liaoning, and Ningxia--require “termination of pregnancy” if the pregnancy violates provincial family-planning regulations. An additional 10 provinces--Fujian, Guizhou, Guangdong, Gansu, Jiangxi, Qinghai, Sichuan, Shanxi, Shaanxi, and Yunnan--require unspecified “remedial measures” to deal with unauthorized pregnancies.¹

The policy relating to sterilisation in China is discussed in detail in a US Department of Justice report titled ‘Chinese State Birth Planning in the 1990s And Beyond’ by Greenhalgh and Winkler which states that:

Until recently, once a couple had a second child (for whatever reason), in principle, sterilization became mandatory for one member of the couple. In many parts of the country, that policy was widely enforced. Birth planning officials follow the same process of

persuading or mobilizing couples for sterilization as they do for abortion, but people are much more averse to sterilization than to abortion. In the past, particularly in rural areas, birth planning workers have preferred sterilization as a means of contraception because the operation is effective, permanent, and not reliant on the vigilance and cooperation of the woman herself. However, especially in the countryside, sterilization is highly unpopular, because people fear practical harm to their health and symbolic diminution of their bodily powers. Accordingly, in practice, if a couple clearly seemed likely to adhere to the birth planning regulations, the couple might be able to avoid sterilization. However, repeated deliberate attempts to have a third child, or success at having a third child, almost certainly demanded sterilization. In the late 1990s, many provinces revised their birth planning regulations, and reportedly all of those provinces dropped mandatory sterilization of couples with two children, requiring only that they practice “safe and effective” contraception.²

In Fujian, family planning regulations are applied through *The Population and Family Planning Regulation of Fujian Province* (Promulgated 26 July 2002, Effective 1 September 2002).³ As set out in Articles 9-12 of these regulations, there are circumstances in which a couple can apply to have a second child in Fujian; for example, under Article 10 (5) of the regulations, a family classified as rural with only one daughter, should be permitted to have a second child.⁴ These regulations also stipulate that extra children born out-of-plan will result in the payment of a social compensation fee and reports suggest that these fines are often enforced (please see question three for detailed information on social compensation fees). No information was found on enforcement differences between villages/townships in Fujian.

A US Department of State (USDOS) 2007 *China Profile of Asylum Claims and Country Conditions* states that according to the Fujian Province Birth Planning Committee (FPBPC) “there have been no cases of forced abortion or sterilization in Fujian in the last 10 years.” The USDOS report further states that ‘it is [im]possible to confirm this claim, and, in 2006, reportedly there were forced sterilisations in Fujian’.⁵

Advice received from the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAT) in 2009 stated that “although Post cannot discount the possibility of forced sterilisation, Post has the impression that it is not a widespread practice.”⁶ Post is aware of recent cases (post 2005) in Fujian Province of forced sterilisation of mothers who have given birth to children outside of the one child policy; however post has only been able to obtain information from Bulletin Board Services posts, whose veracity cannot be confirmed.⁷ The two reports of forced sterilisation acknowledged by post are included below:

(a). According to local bulletin board service (BBS) posts in August 2006 there was a reported case of forced sterilization in Minhou County, Fuzhou City, Fujian Province.

(b). BBS posts stated that Mrs Qiu fell unexpectedly pregnant with a due date of 30 August 2006. Mrs Qiu was required to undergo regular health inspections, however Mrs Qiu reportedly avoided inspection during this pregnancy. A week before the birth of this child, the Population

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and Family Planning Commission of the town became aware of Mrs Qiu’s situation. On 22 August, Mrs Qiu was sent to the hospital by force, where officials from the family planning commission forced an induced labour. The Qiu family reportedly agreed to pay the relevant fine irrespective of cost, and that Mrs Qiu would undergo a sterilization operation after giving birth, regardless of the gender of the new child. Post could not confirm if this sterilization operation actually occurred.\(^8\)

Previous advice from DFAT indicates that family planning law enforcement in Fujian is less coercive than in many other provinces and it is less strict in rural areas; however, enforcement may vary greatly within the province.\(^9\)

In March 2006, an article by the Voice of America reported that a woman in Fujian province who had a second child in contravention of family planning regulations was forcibly sterilised four days after giving birth in October 2005.\(^10\)

2. **Are such women forced to terminate their pregnancies?**

It is possible that a woman in Fujian who is pregnant with her second, out-of-plan child would be forced to terminate the pregnancy, although *The Population and Family Planning Regulations of Fujian Province* (the Regulations) do not specifically state that abortion is required for out-of-plan births nor that they should be enforced. A woman would be subjected to psychological pressure to undergo an abortion, but not usually physically forced to. Article 18 of the Regulations states that individuals who have unauthorised pregnancies should “take remedial measures in time” and that local committees “should urge them to take remedial measures in time”. According to the US Congressional-Executive Commission on China’s *Annual Report 2009*, “the term remedial measures is used synonymously with compulsory abortion”.\(^11\) This report also states that:

> In June 2009, the Wuyishan county government in Fujian published village family planning regulations that stipulate the following: “In emergency situations when pregnancies violate family planning policies, report the matter to the village committee and promptly carry out remedial measures (abortion).”\(^12\)

Forced abortion and forced sterilisation was common in China during the 1980s and early 1990s in the early days of the one-child policy, but the government opted for a policy of “persuasion” rather than coercion in the 1990s and this is still the official policy.

A US Department of Justice report titled ‘Chinese State Birth Planning in the 1990s And Beyond’ by Greenhalgh and Winkler explains the psychological pressure women may be subjected to:

> If contraception fails, women are expected to abort their unauthorized or “out-of-plan” pregnancy. Government-mandated abortion has played an important role in Chinese birth

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planning from the outset. Detailed case studies suggest that a great number of second pregnancies, because they do not meet government requirements, end in abortion.  

…According to program ideals, a woman with an out-of-plan pregnancy should abort on her own initiative. Failing that, she would be “persuaded” to undergo an abortion (shuofu, a colloquial Chinese term). At worst, she would have to be “mobilized” (dongyuan, a technical ideological term) by increasing the social pressure on her from birth planning workers and community leaders. When asked why they had contraceptive operations that obviously they personally would have preferred not to have undergone, most people reply that they “answered the state’s call.” If a woman insists on carrying an out-of-plan pregnancy to term, the punishment is a substantial out-of-plan birth fine for the parents.  

Information on forced abortion within China more generally indicates that while physically coerced abortions are not legally permitted, they continue to be undertaken by local authorities in order to meet family planning targets. Sources indicate that forced abortions have recently occurred in Fujian province. The following incidences of forced abortion are reported to have occurred during the period of 2006 to 2010:

- According to the US Congressional-Executive Commission on China’s (CECC) Annual Report 2009, authorities in some areas of Yunnan and Fujian provinces also employed abortion as an official policy instrument. One instance of forced abortion and one instance of attempted forced abortion were reported to have occurred in Xianyou county in Fujian in May 2009. The report also states that during 2009 the Anxi and Wuyishan counties in Fujian implemented family planning policies requiring that abortion measures be undertaken by authorities for out of plan pregnancies. The report states that in Wuyishan county financial incentives were offered to officials for overseeing abortions.

- An article co-written by the China Aid Association and Women’s Rights Without Frontiers also reports on forced abortion in May 2009 in Xianyou County in Fujian province. Details provided in the report indicate that it is a different case than the forced abortion in Xianyou county reported above. Information contained in the article suggests that this report of forced abortion was sourced from a Chinese blog website. The China Aid Association is a US based Christian organisation which “exists to advance religious freedom in China by exposing the abuses, encouraging the abused and equipping leaders on behalf of the persecuted church”.

- According to an article by Human Rights in China, in March 2007 The Oriental Daily, a Chinese news source reported that “Fujian authorities detained family members,
both immediate and extended, of blacklisted women to force these women to undergo abortion and sterilisation”.  

Advice from DFAT in 2004 on forced abortions occurring in Fujian reported that:

DFAT understands that whilst compulsory abortions continue to occur in Fujian they are much rarer than the 1980’s. DFAT further stated that Fujian’s provincial regulations on population and family planning do not impose compulsory abortion or sterilisation for people with a history of out-of-quota births.

The advice continued:

Furthermore, in present day China, particularly in provinces such as Fujian and Guangdong, sanctions relating to family planning can be avoided through payment of a fee to local authorities, parts of which may be both above and below the table. Such fees are generally not excessive by middle-class Chinese standards, though fees vary from locality to locality.

DFAT also advised that it had “found no record of enforced sterilisation of women in Fujian since the early 1990s.”

3. Do they have alternatives to termination e.g. payment of fine?

Yes. There is the option of resisting pressure from the family planning officials and paying a social compensation fee for out-of-plan births in Fujian. The first additional child born out-of-plan will impose a social compensation fine of two to three times the average annual disposable income of the urban residents or the net average annual income of the rural peasants from the previous year according to Article 39 of The Population and Family Planning Regulations of Fujian Province (2002) as stated below:

Anyone who violates this Regulation by one of the acts listed below shall be ordered to pay the corresponding number of times of the average annual disposable income of the urban residents or the net average annual income of the rural peasants of the county in the previous year when the child is born in violation of this regulation as social compensation fee by family planning administrative department of the county or by township people’s government or urban neighborhood office appointed by such administrative department:

(1) A social compensation of zero point six to one time shall be imposed on those who give birth to a child ahead of the schedule;

(2) A social compensation of two to three times shall be imposed on those who give birth to the first additional child. A social compensation of four to six times shall be imposed on those who give birth to the second additional child. A much more heavy social compensation fee shall be imposed on those who give birth to the third or more additional child.

(3) A social compensation of four to six times shall be imposed on those who give birth to a child born out of an extramarital affair. A much more heavy social compensation fee shall be imposed on those who give birth to the second child born out of an extramarital affair. If the actual annual income of the parties concerned exceeds the average annual disposable income of the urban residents or the net average annual income of the rural peasants of the county in the previous year, the actual income shall be used as the base to calculate the number of the social compensation fees.


The decision in writing to impose social compensation fee shall be made by the family planning administrative department of the county. Such department may appoint the people’s government.  

Advice from DFAT in 2009 states that it appears that Fujianese who breach the one child policy are liable for fines, but there is little information on how they are administered and what exact consequences there are for affected children. Families in breach of the regulations shall be fined two to six times the couple’s annual income as compensation to society. There is no further information on who determines what amount is to be paid, how the fines are levied, and whether there is any avenue for appeal.

The USDOS 2007 *China Profile of Asylum Claims and Country Conditions* also provides information on the enforcement of the one child policy in Fujian:

There is **wide variation in the amount of social compensation fees**, and the severity of hardship they impose, for out-of-plan births …Social compensation fees range from the baseline or less for unmarried couple that has a child to greater than six times the baseline for couples with four children or more and are determined by the local birth planning committee in the city or county where the couple resides. (para.101)

…According to the FPBPC, couples unable to pay the fee immediately may be allowed to pay in instalments. Local birth planning committees have the power to sue families that refuse to pay the requisite fees, but they cannot garnish wages. The FPBPC asserts that parents cannot be sterilized if they are unable or refuse to pay the fee. (para.102)

…The media have reported some cases in which a person was punished because his or her relatives either violated birth planning restrictions or had not paid fees for violating birth planning regulations, although these cases have not been independently verified. Chinese birth planning officials admit the possibility of ‘overzealous’ officials exceeding their authority, but they assert that such behaviour is neither the norm nor sanctioned by the government. (para.103)

The report notes that Consulate General Officials interviewing visa applicants in Fujian found that many ‘violators’ of the one child policy have paid family planning fines and “found no evidence of forced abortions or property confiscations”.  

RRT Country Advice *Research Response CHN35990* in question one discusses family planning laws in Fujian and provides estimated amounts imposed on couples in 2007 through social compensation fees.

4. **What is the name of the organisation that oversees the one child policy in Fuqing?**

As discussed above, family planning is set out at the national level and implemented at the provincial level. According to *Population And Family Planning Regulation Of Fujian Province*,

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23 DIAC Country Information Service 2009, *CIS Request No. 9656: Economic sanctions applied to breaches of the One Child Policy, Fujian Province*, (sourced from DFAT advice of 28 April 2009), 28 April. (CISNET China CX225339)-Attachment 13
the family planning administrative departments of local people’s governments at and above the county level shall be responsible for the work of family planning.

As Fuqing is a county-level city, responsibility for family planning in Fuqing would be with the Family Planning Administrative Department of the Fuqing government, according to Article 4 of the regulations. The provincial department for overseeing family planning in Fujian is the Fujian Province Population and Family Planning Commission whose website is http://www.fjjsw.gov.cn:8080/templates/index.jsp.

5. **On a local level (Shang Jin Village, Shang Jing Town) what body oversees the one child policy?**

As discussed above, family planning is set out at the national level and implemented at the provincial level. The Fujian Family Planning regulations sets out the role played by village committees who are responsible for the promotion and implementation of national family planning policies at the village level. **Article 5** states that:

> People’s governments of townships, or towns and urban neighbourhood administrative offices shall be responsible for the work of population and family planning in their administrative jurisdictions and shall thoroughly carry out the implementation plan for population and family planning. Villagers’ committees and urban neighbourhood residents’ committees shall do a good job of family planning work within their scope of responsibility.\(^{27}\)

Other articles of the regulations note that the Villagers’ Committees are responsible for implementing family planning in villages of Fujian province. **Article 18** states that “those who have become pregnant in violation of this Regulation should take remedial measure in time. Villagers’ committees or the resident’s committees or their units should urge them to take remedial measures in time.” **Article 21** refers to the treatment of women who undergo sterilisation after giving birth and says that villagers who undergo sterilisation shall be adequately compensated by the villagers’ or residents’ committees or township people’s government or urban neighbourhood office.\(^{28}\)

A 2006 journal article by Dr Thomas Bernstein, Professor of Political Science at the East Asian Institute, Columbia University, briefly describes the responsibility of village committees in implementing government policies including family planning and the “administration of family planning quotas”. The report also states that a village committee is “evaluated by its superiors” regarding the meeting of targets. The article reports that:

> Townships are the lowest level of state power – the village committee is legally a mass organization responsible for implementation of numerous tasks handed down from above, such as development plans, tax collection, promotion of education, family planning, etc. Its performance in meeting targets is evaluated by its superiors, with points being awarded for the completion of assignments.

> …Village committees and the village assembly to which they report are empowered to take charge of village-level affairs, such as the allocation of village funds, e.g., in-come from collective property, fund-raising for projects such as schools or road repair, compensation for cadres, the distribution of taxes and fees among house-holds, administration of family planning quotas.\(^{29}\)

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\(^{27}\) Population and Family Planning Regulation of Fujian Province (Promulgated 26 July 2002, Effective 1 September 2002), UNHCR website – Attachment 3.

\(^{28}\) Population and Family Planning Regulation of Fujian Province (Promulgated 26 July 2002, Effective 1 September 2002), UNHCR website – Attachment 3.

6. Is there information about the notices requiring sterilisation? Is there information about the contents of such a notice and the form it takes?

No information was found regarding sterilisation notices. The Regulations are vague and do not stipulate that notices are provided to couples with out-of-plan pregnancies. It is therefore not known whether there is a standard notice nor the contents contained within it.

**Article 43** states that “any unit or person that violates this Regulation in any of the following circumstances shall be ordered by the relevant local people’s government to correct the situation and shall be criticized in a circular issued by that government.” However, it is not clear whether the order is by the form of a notice.

The English version of the National Population and Family Planning Commission of China website does not contain any information regarding sterilisation notices.  

7. Is there information about what happens to women who do not comply with a tubal ligation requirement?

No information was found relating specifically to women who do not comply with undergoing tubal ligation, and the action could be different in each circumstance as it is dependent upon the family planning officials of each area.

The information provided below relates more generally to women who do not comply with family planning regulations as set out in *Population and Family Planning Regulation of Fujian Province*.

**Articles 43** states that any person who fails to use effective contraceptive measures or take as required effective remedial measures “shall be ordered by the relevant local people’s government to correct the situation and shall be criticized in a circular issued by that government.” If the situation is not “corrected” then a fine of 500 Yuan will be imposed by the family planning administrative department of the county.

In addition to the punishments mentioned above for not complying with the family planning regulations, the government also provides incentives to families who abide by the family planning regulations. Therefore, families who do not comply will not be eligible for the benefits provided by the government which include free medical care until the child is 14 years of age, bonus lump-sums and free schooling. **Article 3** states that an incentive and social security system shall be established to promote the family planning work. **Article 31** of the Regulations states that in order to facilitate family planning, the government shall establish incentive funds to reward citizens that practice family planning. These benefits are discussed further in **Articles 32 to 38**.

**Attachments**


