

For Immediate Release

## The Women's Foundation Launches 'She Objects' Campaign

**Calling for community-wide collaboration to safeguard the positive portrayal of women, challenge stereotypes and celebrate diversity in the media**

**Hong Kong, June 8, 2016** – The Women's Foundation (TWF), an NGO dedicated to the advancement of women and girls in Hong Kong, launched today its new “She Objects” documentary and campaign spotlighting the role of the media in creating and exacerbating damaging gender stereotypes. The campaign calls for all those who produce and consume media to object to content that objectifies, sexualises and diminishes women. TWF invites organisations and individuals to pledge to safeguard the positive portrayal of women, challenge stereotypes and celebrate diversity in the media going forward.

The heart of the campaign is an innovative locally-produced documentary “She Objects” which TWF will premiere in Hong Kong on June 14.

Following its international preview at the FLO Film Festival in Mumbai in February, “She Objects” was featured at the Cannes Film Festival as part of a Women in Motion Talk hosted by the Festival and Kering. In Cannes, TWF CEO, Su-Mei Thompson, introduced “She Objects” as part of a panel of female film-makers who are using film to advocate for social causes. “She Objects” was also the focus of Su-Mei’s remarks when she participated in the Women in the Media panel organised by UBS last week in conjunction with the launch of the photo exhibition of Women: New Portraits by Annie Leibovitz.

Commissioned by TWF, in partnership with Women Helping Women and directed by Hong Kong director Nicola Fan, “She Objects” challenges viewers to think critically about and resist the biased and often dehumanising portrayal of women in media. The film explores the impact of this on Hong Kong society and breaks new ground in bridging local, regional and global research and trends. Featuring engaging insights from celebrities including singer-actress-writer Joyce Cheng and real-life stories and interviews with leading experts, the documentary explores the correlation between the media’s portrayal of women and eating disorders and self-esteem issues for girls, violence against women and the erosion of female ambition.

According to Su-Mei Thompson, TWF CEO, “While media can be a powerful force for good whether it’s in terms of providing a voice for marginalised groups or corraling support for social causes or inspiring new mindsets, too many parts of the media continue to collude –

if unwittingly – in the on-going objectification, sexualisation and diminishing of women. The negative consequences of this extend beyond women and girls and include men and boys. But the stakes are particularly high for girls today. Research confirms that the more TV a girl watches, the fewer options she thinks she has in life. We also know that 6 out of 10 girls choose not to take part in an activity because they don't want to draw attention to the way they look. "She Objects" also explores how the portrayal of women as sex objects contributes to a culture where sexual coercion is more permissible. We hope "She Objects" will provoke Hong Kong society to pause, reflect and act to change the status quo."

With sponsorship from Kering Group, Qeelin, HSBC and FANCL, the support of the Education Bureau, Equal Opportunities Commission, M21 of Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, The University of Hong Kong and Facebook as well as a number of other leading media partners and NGOs, the film's June 14 premiere will be a red carpet event where key players from Hong Kong's media, creative, film and entertainment industries will pledge to safeguard the positive portrayal of women, reject stereotypes and celebrate diversity in the media going forward.

TWF has also partnered with Professor Stephen Chiu, Co-Director of the Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies of the Chinese University of Hong Kong to develop teaching materials drawing on the film to promote media literacy and critical thinking among university and secondary students. The curriculum is currently being piloted in ten schools and universities in Hong Kong. On June 23, The University of Hong Kong will host a community screening and panel discussion. Stakeholders from government, academia, families and students will discuss how She Objects can inspire and educate by promoting critical thinking about media creation and consumption.

The trailer for the She Objects documentary and more information on the #SHEOBJECTS pledge are available at [sheobjects.org](http://sheobjects.org).

#### [Key Resources & Data Points for Media](#)

- 50% of secondary students say they have experienced sexual harassment (Equal Opportunities Commission, 2012)
- In Hong Kong, the number of teenage sex offenders has increased by 70% over the past ten years (Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, 2010)
- Boys as young as nine are watching porn online (Prof. To Siu Ming et al., 2012)
- 30% of entertainment magazines in Hong Kong are slimming advertisements directed at women (Fung, 2005)
- 58% of girls choose not to participate in activities because they don't want to draw attention to the way they look (YouGov, 2015)

- Nearly 90% of women in Hong Kong between the age of 18 and 30 think about their weight all or some of the time (YouGov, 2015)
- On screen, only 13.9% of executive leaders are women while women actually occupy 24% of executive leadership roles in real life (Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media, 2014)

Confirmed official media partners, government, NGO and other supporting partners so far include:

#### List of official media partners

- Bloomberg
- Financial Times
- Hong Kong Tatler
- Marie Claire
- Sassy
- She.com
- SCMP Group
- ViuTV

#### List of government, NGO and other supporting partners

- Community Business
- Education Bureau
- Equal Opportunities Commission
- End Child Sexual Abuse Foundation
- Her Fund
- Hong Kong Association of Sexuality Educators, Researchers & Therapists Ltd.
- Hong Kong Eating Disorders Association
- Reel Women Hong Kong
- The Family Planning Association of Hong Kong
- The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups
- HKFYG M21
- Thomson Reuters

#### About She Objects

Commissioned by leading women's NGO The Women's Foundation of Hong Kong and directed by emerging young talent, 27-year old Nicola Fan, She Objects is the first documentary of its kind in Hong Kong to explore how traditional and new forms of media create and exacerbate gender stereotypes with often damaging consequences.

#### About The Women's Foundation

TWF is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to improving the lives of women and girls in Hong Kong. Our goals are threefold - challenging gender stereotypes, increasing the number of women in policy and decision-making roles, and empowering women in poverty to achieve a better quality of life for themselves and their families. We aspire to conduct ground-breaking research, run innovative and impactful community programmes, and



engage in advocacy and education. For more information on TWF, please visit: [www.twfhk.org](http://www.twfhk.org).

### Media Enquiries

#### **The Women's Foundation**

Crystal Chan  
Tel: +852 2581 1151  
Email: [crystal.chan@twfhk.org](mailto:crystal.chan@twfhk.org)

Lisa Moore  
Tel: +852 5281 1873  
Email: [lisa.moore@twfhk.org](mailto:lisa.moore@twfhk.org)

#### **Ruder Finn Asia**

Gregory Cole  
Tel: +852 2201 6416  
Email: [coleg@ruderfinnasia.com](mailto:coleg@ruderfinnasia.com)

Jennifer Chow  
Tel: +852 2201 6433  
Email: [chowj@ruderfinnasia.com](mailto:chowj@ruderfinnasia.com)