

3. Promotion of Gender Equality in Regions and Agricultural Communities

■ Support for the Promotion of Gender Equality in Regions

To promote gender equality in regions, efforts thus far have focused on acquisition of knowledge and conducting education about perceptions through activities such as workshops and training programs. In order to further those efforts, from now on it will be important for various constituents such as the government, corporations, local governments, and residents to collaborate and form partnerships in their respective regions and develop specific activities in order to solve the tasks of their own regions.

In order to more effectively promote such specific activities in regions, the government will support proactive undertakings aimed at solving the problems of the respective regions.

Problem areas

Insufficient awareness of the importance of gender equality in measures and policies for regional problem-solving
gender and age biases concerning participation in regional activities
Lack of opportunities for women's activities, due to deep-rooted perceptions of fixed gender roles, etc.

Necessary undertakings

Building a gender equality base in regions = improving and strengthening the functions of gender-equality centers, etc.

→ promoting gender equality by training employees and staff, forming networks among centers, NPOs, and corporations, etc.

Expansion of participation of a wide variety of people in regions

→ creating female leaders of regional organizations, etc.

Promotion of gender equality in the fields of community-building and tourism, disaster prevention, and the environment

Specifically, the following five projects will be carried out:

(1) Collection and provision of information

Information on examples of forward-thinking undertakings related to promotion of gender equality in regions will be collected and provided on a website.

(2) Practical research and study

With the aim of solving problems in regions, forward-thinking examples of practical activities that incorporate the perspective of gender equality will be collected, analyzed, and provided.

(3) Development and provision of staff training programs

Training programs will be developed for employees of local governments and gender equality centers, with the aim of improving specialized knowledge and various coordination abilities.

(4) Dispatch of advisers

In response to requests from local governments and women's organizations, etc., "advisors" capable of providing appropriate guidance and advice will be dispatched to regions in order to improve activities for solving problems and support the creation of new networks.

(5) Collaborative support projects

Collaborative organizations made up of various constituents that carry out regional activities will be formed. With the aim of solving regional problems, the organizations will specifically implement practical activities that incorporate the perspective of gender equality, and widely spread the positive results of those activities.

Examples of undertakings

Development of community, planning and running tourism events, etc. by the liaison council of a regional women's organization through collaboration with the chamber of commerce

Promotion of Work-life Balance carried out collaboratively by the government, NPOs, and corporations

Child-care support carried out collaboratively by schools, social welfare departments, PTAs, and NPOs

Environmental conservation undertakings carried out collaboratively by the government, universities, and NPOs.

Disaster-prevention activities carried out collaboratively by the government, regional firefighting brigades, etc.

■ Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality

The Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality was inaugurated in 1996 with a view to exchanging information and ideas widely liaising with 109 people in various fields of society and promoting national measures to promote the creation of a gender-equal society. The Conference conducts information and opinion exchanges with the general public from all levels and sectors of society by holding the overall conference, conducting activities through "teams" established for each individual important issues and holding public forums several times a year, and it is proactively promoting undertakings aimed at the creation of a gender-equal society.

■ Gender Equality Forum, Programs Encouraging Gender Equality Declaration Cities

Since FY 2000, the Cabinet Office and local governments have jointly held the "Gender Equality Forum". Individuals representing various fields in society have attended the forums to raise awareness about gender equality through lectures and sub-sessions.

Also, since FY 1994, municipalities other than government-designated cities have become "Gender Equality Declaration Cities" and implemented "Programs Encouraging Gender Equality Declaration Cities" to encourage various initiatives for gender equality.

■ Promotion of Gender Equality Aimed at Realization of Vibrant Agricultural, Forestry, and Fisheries Communities

(1) Changing perceptions and expanding women's participation in policy decision-making processes

The government is promoting correction of behavior patterns that result from perceptions of fixed gender roles and old conventions that remain deep-rooted in agricultural, forestry, and fisheries communities, and transformation of attitudes and behaviors in all areas. It is also investigating the situations in such areas and conducting research in order to expand women's participation in policy decision-making processes, and urging the setting of specific objectives by local governments and organizations related to the agricultural, forestry, and fisheries industries.

A. Transformation of attitudes and behaviors

B. Expansion of women's participation in policy decision making processes

(2) Improvement of women's economic status and creation of conditions and an environment for their employment

Women's positioning in operations will be clarified, with the aim of improving the economic position of women in the agricultural, forestry, and fisheries industries and in agricultural, forestry, and fisheries communities. Preparations are also being made to support women's employment in farming and creation of a woman-friendly work environment.

A. Improvement of women's economic status

B. Support for women's employment in farming and creation of a women friendly work environment

(3) Creation of an environment in which it is easy for women to live and be active

The government is promoting a variety of undertakings so that women are not excessively burdened in either industry or their daily lives. In order to deal with the declining birth rate and aging of populations in agricultural, forestry, and fisheries communities, daily life support is being provided, such as developing various services that take into consideration the support of elderly women and creation of necessary facilities, and efforts are being made to utilize the pension system effectively.

A. Creation conditions so women can work comfortably

B. Dealing with aging populations