

9. International Cooperation

Promotion of the formation of a gender-equal society is closely linked to efforts by the international community. The Basic Act for Gender-Equal Society upholds “international cooperation” as one of the basic principles for the formation of a gender-equal society.

Under this principle and the Third Basic Plan for Gender Equality, various treaties such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and discussions at international conferences are being made widely known, and gender equality is moving forward in tandem with international movements to improve the status of women. In addition, efforts are being made to conduct ODA effectively by promoting gender mainstreaming.

■ Collaboration with the United Nations and Other International Organizations

The United Nations

Efforts are being made to actively introduce international regulations designed to improve the status of women, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the “Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,” and discussions by the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

Based on the final opinion of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women concerning the sixth report on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which was submitted in 2008, follow-up reports on the following things were submitted in August 2011: 1) revision of the Civil Code to adopt a system to allow for the choice of surnames for married couples, etc., and 2) temporary special measures to expand women’s participation in society.

In November 2012 an additional information report related to measures undertaken in order to revise the Civil Code based on the results of a review by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women concerning the follow-up report was made.

The Committee has requested that Japan’s next periodic report be submitted in July 2014.

In February and March 2013, the 57th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women was held at the United Nations headquarters, and a statement was issued by Ms. Hiroko HASHIMOTO, representative of Japan.

The statement discussed, as Japan’s undertakings in relation to “elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls,” which is this year’s priority theme for this session, mutual promotion of a wide variety of undertakings that correspond to the forms of violence, along with creating a base for eradication, such as driving home social awareness in order to eradicate violence against women according to related laws and regulations and government action plans such as the Third Basic Plan for Gender Equality. It also asserted, in international cooperation, the introduction of efforts to hold training for ASEAN countries for prevention of trafficking in person (TIP), and things such as considering formulation of national action plans based on UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

Japan is also actively working to make other contributions through collaboration with UN Women, which was launched in January 2011 and of which Japan is one of its initial Executive Board Members.

APEC

As the host country of the 15th Women Leaders Network (WLN) meeting held in Tokyo in September 2010, the 8th Gender Focal Point Network (GFPN) meeting held in Ranzan-machi, Saitama Prefecture in September 2010, and the Women's Entrepreneurship Summit (WES) meeting held in the City of Gifu in October 2010, Japan is contributing to activities for the proactive participation of women in the economy, as promoted by APEC, aimed at further development of local economies.

In September 2011 a "Women and the Economy Summit", at which the private sector and the government hold discussions, was held for the first time in San Francisco in the United States, and members from Japan including Senior Vice-Minister Ikko NAKATSUKA attended. A "Women and the Economy Forum" that was held in St.Petersburg, Russia in September 2012 was attended by people such as Minister of State for Gender Equality Masaharu NAKAGAWA.

In September 2013 a "Women and the Economy Forum" was held on the Island of Bali in Indonesia.

Participants from Japan included Minister of State for Gender Equality Masako MORI, The Parliamentary Vice Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Yukari SATO, and private sector participants, and they spoke about things such as measures to promote women's active participation in Japan.



APEC2013・Women and the Economy Forum (WEF)

ASEAN + 3

ASEAN + 3 is ASEAN plus Japan, China and South Korea. ASEAN + 3 committee meetings about women have been held every year since 2009. In October 2012, the first ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Women was held along with in Vientiane, Laos, and participants from Japan, China and South Korea were invited. From Japan, Minister of State for Gender Equality Ikko NAKATSUKA attended, and discussions were held about cooperative systems, including future creation of a ministerial meeting related to gender equality in the East Asian region.

■ International Cooperation

Conducting ODA effectively through promotion of gender mainstreaming

Under the Initiative on Gender and Development (GAD) formulated in 2005, Japan has been providing support in the form of official development assistance (ODA) that focuses mainly on participating in the three fields of education, health, and economic and social activities. In addition, Japan is strengthening support for efforts intended to improve the status of women, such as gender equality in developing nations, while at the same time respecting such countries' ownership.

The East Asia Gender Equality Ministerial Meeting

On the initiative of Japan, the first East Asia Gender Equality Ministerial Meeting was convened in Tokyo in 2006.

Since then, it has been held approximately every two years, deeper discussions that include responses to issues that correspond to economic circumstances surrounding gender equality in the countries of East Asia and new issues are being held, and good examples are being shared at the ministerial level. Through these things, results are being achieved such as the promotion of specific undertakings by each of the participating countries. In May 2013 the fifth meeting was held in Beijing, China.

International cooperation projects

Through collaboration with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), international support is being promoted for main organizations in developing countries, through activities such as inviting trainees from other countries to Japan and sending experts to other countries.

Collaboration with NGOs

In order to promote international exchanges and cooperation from the perspective of gender equality, effective exchanges, collaboration, and cooperation are being carried out with the governments of other countries, international organizations, local governments, and NGOs in Japan and other countries.

PR activity

To introduce initiatives being undertaken in Japan for gender equality, the Cabinet Office produces information brochures in English for distribution to the governments of other countries and to international organizations etc.