

## 10. Recent Important Efforts for Promoting of Policies Related to Gender Equality

### ■ Active Participation by Women

The second Abe Cabinet inaugurated in December 2012 perceived the “power of women” to be the “greatest potential that the nation has;” since positioning this in the center of Japan’s growth strategy in terms of being indispensable to the ongoing economic growth of Japan, initiatives for empowerment of women have rapidly expanded, gathering momentum, broadening cooperation and resonating both domestically and overseas.

- ▶ In June 2014, male leaders who have already been involved in promoting an active role of women issued the “Declaration on Action by A Group of Male Leaders Who Will Create a Society in which Women Shine”. Members stated, in the declaration, that they would commit themselves to empower women in their own organization, also they have expanded support for the declaration to male leaders. Supporters promote concrete initiatives based on the declaration from their respective perspectives and work to expand the supporters’ network.



In March 2017, a symposium and supporters’ general meeting were held that introduced good practices of initiatives being conducted by supporters. Participants shared know-how, exchanged information and opinions, and worked to broaden the network. In addition, in December 2017, a report “Male leaders’ challenges to promote women’s active participation in Japan” was published (in Japanese and English) to compile the ideas of supporters on accelerating women’s active participation along with best practices of initiatives.



#### <Column> Initiative by UN Women “IMPACT10×10×10”

Prime Minister Abe participated in the HeForShe campaign led by UN Women, which encourages the involvement of men and boys in promoting gender equality. “IMPACT10×10×10”, a measure to accelerate this, is an initiative encouraging strategic efforts by 10 heads of states, 10 corporates and 10 universities in June 2015, Prime Minister Abe was selected as one of the 10 heads of states. In September 2017, Prime Minister Abe attended the announcement ceremony for the HeForShe IMPACT10×10×10 Parity Report, hosted by UN Women in NY during the United Nations General Assembly high-level week. At the ceremony, a report summarizing the status of achievement of the commitments made by the IMPACT champions was launched. In his speech, Prime Minister Abe presented Japan’s efforts and progress made so far to realize “A Society in which All Women Shine” and introduced the World Assembly for Women(WAW!2017) held by Japan at Tokyo in November 2017. Through this initiative, Japan will continue to update the international community with Japan’s efforts to realize “A Society in which All Women Shine”, with the expectation that it will further enhance men’s engagement in the empowerment of women in Japan.



- ▶ In November 2017, Japan held the fourth World Assembly for Women (WAW!). 64 top leaders and experts active in women's empowerment participated in the WAW!2017 as speakers with 2,400 audience.



WAW! 2017  
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## ■ Work

Allowing for diverse and flexible working styles for both men and women is essential to the active participation of women, so work style reforms contributing to women's active participation and increased productivity are being strongly promoted based on the recently compiled Action Plan for the Realization of Work Style Reform and other sources.

In addition, regarding women account for a high percentage of non-regular workers, improving their employment conditions is essential to promote women's economic empowerment.

- ▶ In April 2013, the Revised Labour Contract Act was fully enforced. The Revised Act introduced the following three new rules: [i] a mechanism that converts fixed-term labour contracts into open-ended labour contracts as requested by the workers in case in which fixed-term labour contracts are renewed repeatedly; [ii] statutory status of the doctrine of “yatoi-dome” that is established by precedent (termination of labour contract by employers is prohibited under some circumstances) ; [iii] a rule that prohibits the imposition of working conditions on fixed-term contract workers unreasonably different from those of open-ended contract workers on the grounds of fixed-term labour contracts.
- ▶ The Act for Partial Revision of the Act on Improvement, etc. of Employment Management for Part-Time Workers, which includes the further reinforcement of measures to ensure equal or balanced treatment of part-time workers with regular workers, and to make part-time workers understand and feel more satisfied with their treatment, was enforced in April 2015.
- ▶ In order for the further stabilization of the employment and protection of the dispatched workers, the Act for Partial Revision of the Act for Securing the Proper Operation of Worker Dispatching Undertakings and Protection of Dispatched Workers was enforced in September 2015. The revised act strengthened the following measures ;[i] stabilizing the employment and career building of dispatched workers [ii] balancing the treatment between dispatched workers and workers directly hired by clients.
- ▶ The expansion of employee's pension insurance and health insurance coverage was implemented from October 2016 for short-time workers in companies whose number of employees is 501 or more according to the bill for reinforcing pension function. In addition, The Act for Partial Revision of the National Pension Act, etc. to strengthen the sustainability of the public pension system went into force in April 2017, making it possible to expand the scope of coverage of employee's pension insurance and health insurance at companies with 500 or fewer employees upon the agreement of labor and management. For further expansion of application of employee's pension insurance and health insurance, it should be considered within three years from the expansion (in October 2016). The government will continue to consider it while taking into account enforcement situation, employment realities of short-time workers, and the impact on the management, etc.
- ▶ The Council for the Realization of Work Style Reform, chaired by the Prime Minister, has been convened since September 2016 to contribute to deliberations regarding establishment, etc. of an action plan for the purpose of realizing work style reform, beginning with rectifying long working hours. In March 2017, the council compiled the Action Plan for the Realization of Work Style Reform, which first of all expresses its basic thinking on implementing upper-limit restrictions on overtime work, including the necessity of rectifying long working hours to make it possible to realistically balance work with child-raising and nursing care responsibilities, and then clarifies the direction of legal reforms based on labor-management agreement through the Japanese Trade Union Confederation and Japan Federation of Economic Organizations. In addition, the plan clarifies the direction of legal reforms aiming to eliminate unreasonable inequality of treatment between regular workers and non-regular workers.

## Work-life Balance

- ▶ To promote employees' work-life balance, it is essential for executives and managers to reform consciousness and behaviors. So, the government held seminars in cooperation with economic organizations to enlighten executives and managers about the importance of work-life balance, and spread the know-hows and good models toward their concrete efforts.
- ▶ Based on the Charter for Work-life Balance and Action Policy for Promoting Work-life Balance (finalized by the Council of Executives of Public and Private Sectors to Promote Work-life Balance in December 2007), initiatives of companies, workers, citizens, the government, and local governments are broadly introduced and the level of realization of work-life balance is ascertained. Initiatives to be given priority going forward are then compiled into the Work-life Balance Report.

## Men's Awareness and Lifestyles

Reforming men's awareness and lifestyles is also extremely important to creating a future of women's active participation in Japan, so the government is working to promote the participation of men in housework, child-raising, etc.

- ▶ Toward the realization of a society in which men participate in housework and child-raising, etc., the government is publicizing the issue through various media in order to deepen the understanding of households, corporations and society of the significance of men's participation in housework and child-raising, etc., and is conducting, based on organic public-private coordination, the Get Dads Cooking campaign to encourage men to participate in cooking, a project to support the participation of men of the child-raising generation in housework and child-raising, etc.



Campaign web page

- ▶ Regarding the Thank You Papa Project, which promotes men's participation in housework and child-raising, etc. and also awareness reform by encouraging men to take vacation days immediately after their spouse gives birth, the government worked to build momentum among the child-raising generation by conducting awareness-raising activities, etc. at various events, etc. utilizing a handbook for local governments, human resource and administrative division managers at corporations and organizations, and people raising children.

## Children

- ▶ Diverse childcare facilities are being expanded by promoting the establishment of facilities for approximately 600,000 children based on the Plan to Accelerate the Zero Childcare Waiting List Project, etc., including expansion of childcare facilities for 70,000 children through the Private Sector-led Childcare Program. Other initiatives are also being implemented to end childcare waiting lists while ensuring stable funding based on the Plan for Raising Children with Peace of Mind.

- ▶ The Employment Insurance Act was partially revised to facilitate both men and women to take child care leave in March 2014. Based on the partially revised Act, the childcare leave benefit rate was raised from 50 % to 67 % of wage for the first six months of the child care leave. Benefits are tax exempt, and furthermore, social insurance premiums are waived during child care leave. Therefore, the actual amount paid is around 80% of the pre-leave take-home pay. In addition, Act on Childcare Leave, Caregiver Leave, and Other Measures for the Welfare of Workers Caring for Children or Other Family Members (hereinafter referred to as Child Care and Family Care Leave Law), revised in March 2016, has made it easier for people to balance their work and child care or family care, due to the easing of the requirements for fixed-term contract workers to take child care and family care leave, as well as obligation of the establishment of systems for taking family care leave in installments and restricting overtime work for family care, among other measures. Moreover, Child Care and Family Care Leave Law revised in March 2017 has made it possible for workers to take childcare leave until their child is two years old if there are no childcare facilities available, etc. Further, when companies are aware that there are eligible workers, they are required to inform the person individually about programs related to childcare leave and establish leave programs that can be used for the purpose of childcare.
- ▶ The Act on Advancement of Measures to Support Raising Next-Generation Children supports companies' initiatives by certifying companies that are making efforts to help employees balance their work and child care ("Kurumin" certification system).

## ■ People Facing Living Difficulties, and the Elderly

- ▶ The Basic Act for Persons with Disabilities was revised in 2011 to add the provisions to the effect that "the measures to support the independence and social participation of persons with disabilities must be systematically formulated and implemented through a coordinated framework of cooperation in accordance with the sex, age, state of the disability, and lifestyle of a person with a disability" to the basic policy for measures in consideration of women with disabilities too.
- ▶ The Act for Eliminating Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities was enacted in June 2013 and enforced in April 2016. The Act stipulates that necessary and reasonable accommodation for removal of social barriers shall be provided "according to the sex, age and state of the disability of the relevant person with disabilities." (As for businesses sectors, obligation to make endeavors.)
- ▶ The Act on Special Measures concerning Support for Employment of Mothers in Fatherless Household and Fathers in Motherless Household was enforced in March 2013. Based on the Act, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) is endeavoring to enhance employment support measures for such mothers and fathers and to ask private business operators for cooperation.
- ▶ In June 2014, in order to create a "Community-based Integrated Care System" whereby medical, long term care, prevention, habitation, and livelihood support services are provided comprehensively so that the elderly can continue to live in familiar areas with peace of mind, the Amendatory Law to the Related Acts for Securing Comprehensive Medical and Long-Term Care in the Community was enacted.

## ■ Education and Research Fields

- ▶ The new National Curriculum Standards for elementary and middle schools revised in 2017 continue to emphasize human rights; equality, mutual understanding, and cooperation between men and women; and the importance of respecting families built on mutual cooperation between men and women. For the National Curriculum Standard for high schools, which is slated for revisions going forward, planning is also taking place on the same content.
- ▶ The 5th Science and Technology Basic Plan, decided by the Cabinet in January 2016, pursues the percentage of the employment target for female researchers in the natural science field as a whole to 30%.

## ■ Science Technology and Academic Fields

- ▶ To increase the number of women science and engineering professionals who will lead the next generation, the government is carrying out "Riko-challe"(support choosing STEM fields\*) to inspire female students to choose STEM careers. The number of the Campaign's supporters, including companies, universities, and academic bodies, has reached 712 (as of December 2017). To further accelerate the efforts for encouraging women students to choose STEM, the Support Network comprised of members of industry, academia, and government is being developed on a full-scale basis since FY2016.

\* STEM: Science, Thchnology, Engineering and Mathematics



- ▶ With the cooperation of these supporters, the Campaign holds summer events mainly for women junior high and high school students over their summer break, which include visits to STEM workplaces, hands-on experience, and facility tours. In 2017, 125 organizations held 186 events nationwide. Approximately 23,000 people attended the events, including female children and students and their parents and guardians. Additionally a website was established that publishes information on events, messages from women in STEM who serve as role models, and messages from companies and universities that support women in science and engineering.
- ▶ In May 2017, the Gender Summit 10 satellite event entitled “How Can a Future Course Change Your Life? Your Future Broadens with STEM” was jointly held by the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST), Cabinet Office, and Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. Aimed at junior-high and high school girls, parents and guardians, and educators, the event served to enhance interest and understanding regarding the “future image of choosing STEM career” through experts, female researchers and engineers excelling in the field.



“Riko-challe” (support choosing STEM fields)



Gender Summit 10 satellite event

## Disaster Risk Reduction and Reconstruction

- ▶ With regard to measures and responses necessary from the perspective of gender equality, the Cabinet Office issued the Guidelines for Disaster Planning Response and Reconstruction from a Gender Equal Perspective, which serve as guidelines for local governments and related organizations.
- ▶ In addition, an English-language pamphlet outlining the above guidelines was created to share Japan’s experience with large-scale natural disasters with the international community.



English-language pamphlet’s cover



Fundamental approach



Efforts deemed necessary at each phase

- ▶ In June 2016, a Training Program on Disaster Risk Reduction from the Perspective of Gender Equality was established to train local government personnel who can plan, design, and implement disaster risk reduction measures based on the perspective of gender quality.

## ■ International Cooperation

- ▶ In September 2013, Prime Minister Abe expressed his intention to strengthen support for realizing “A Society in which Women Shine” in his address at the 68th session of the United Nations General Assembly. Specifically, he announced that Japan would implement ODA in excess of \$3 billion in the three years from 2013 to 2015, based on the three pillars: “Facilitating Women’s Active Role/Participation in Society and Women’s Empowerment,” “Enhancing Japan’s Efforts in the area of Women’s Health Care, as a part of Promotion of Universal Health Coverage (UHC),” and “Supporting Women’s Participation and Protecting their rights in the area of Peace and Security.” Japan has fully implemented it.
- ▶ “The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” which was adopted by the UN in September 2015 as the successor to the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals), includes a specific goal to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.” Japan launched the SDGs Promotion Headquarters headed by Prime Minister in May 2016, and adopted “The SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles” in December, as Japan’s national strategy for the implementation of the SDGs.
- ▶ The Development Cooperation Charter decided by the Cabinet in February 2015 continues to promote human security as one of the basic policies, and upholds the “promotion of women’s participation” as one of the implementation principles of development cooperation.
- ▶ In September 2015, “Basic Design for Peace and Health” was adopted as a guideline for Global Health policy under the Development Cooperation Charter. It sets a goal of achieving universal health coverage (UHC), to ensure affordable access to basic health services for all whenever they need them throughout their life. It also mentions the services to be provided, including women-focused areas, such as nutrition improvement, maternal and child health, and sexual and reproductive health.
- ▶ In May 2016, Japan launched the “Development Strategy for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment” as one of thematic policies under the Development Cooperation Charter. The Strategy focuses on 1) promotion of women’s and girl’s rights, 2) building the capacity of women and girls to reach their full potential, and 3) advancement of women’s leadership in politics, economy and other public fields. On the occasion of the G7 Ise-Shima Summit (May 2016), Japan announced its plan to train roughly 5,000 female administrative officers and assist education for approximately 50,000 female students over the three-year period of 2016-18. Moreover, on the occasion of the World Assembly for Women: WAW! 2016, Prime Minister Abe announced to implement over US\$3 billion in total to empower women in developing countries by 2018, and this commitment is being steadily implemented.
- ▶ When Ms. Michelle Obama, a former First Lady of the United States, visited Japan in March 2015, the Government of Japan declared that in the three years from 2015, it would provide ODA in excess of JPY 42 billion to provide quality education for women and girls, ensuring the economic independence of women and enabling them to determine their own lives based on their own will.
- ▶ At the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VI) held in Kenya in August 2016, particular emphasis was given to women empowerment in one of the priority areas of TICAD VI, namely, promoting social stability for shared prosperity. In the thematic session, participants discussed the ways to increase employment through job training for women and youth. The conference concluded with the adoption of an outcome document, Nairobi Declaration, which reconfirmed the importance of protection and empowerment of individuals, notably, women. Also, at the TICAD Ministerial meeting in August 2017, Japan emphasized the importance of gender equality for inclusive and sustainable development and recognized the Africa’s efforts to increase involvement of women in decision-making process.

- ▶ Japan has been strongly supporting the projects implemented by the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) on Sexual Violence in Conflict and cooperating with other stakeholders in the international society. During the end of October to early November, 2017, invited by the Government of Japan, SRSG Ms. Pramila Patten participated in the event co-hosted by Japan and the British Embassy in Tokyo on preventing sexual violence in conflict and raised awareness of government officials, civil societies including NGOs, researchers and media for this important issue. She also had meetings with government officials and the members of Evaluation Committee of Japan's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.



Ms. Patten and Evaluation Committee member of Japan's National Action Plan on women, peace and security

- ▶ Japan has been strengthening partnership with UN Women. Japan's contributions amounted to approximately US\$2 million in 2013 and has exceeded US\$20 million since 2015. In 2016, Japan became the second largest contributor among the member countries. Moreover, UN Women Japan Liaison Office opened in April 2015, regional network hub and the only one of its kind in Asia to be a network hub in the region.
- ▶ In May 2014, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Secretary General of NATO, Mr. Anders Fogh Rasmussen agreed in the meeting to dispatch a Japanese staff to the NATO Headquarters as Japan-NATO cooperation in the field of women, peace and security. A female Self Defense Force (SDF) officer was dispatched to the NATO Headquarters in December of the same year (the second female SDF officer has been dispatched since July 2017). In the office of the Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, these officers have contributed to incorporating the perspective of gender equality in various activities of NATO and provided advice for encouraging women's participation.
- ▶ In 2015, Japan launched its National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and relevant resolutions. It targets both national and international settings to implement WPS agenda, and focuses not only in conflict but also natural disaster Japan started monitoring and published evaluation report of NAP since 2016 and the NAP will be reviewed in 2019.
- ▶ In the G7 Ise-Shima summit, Japan led the discussion on gender issues as one of the priority agenda. The G7 leaders endorsed the "G7 Guiding Principles for Capacity building of Women and Girls" and the "Women's Initiative in Developing STEM Career (WINDS)", focusing on women's empowerment through education, training and promoting women's active role especially in the field of natural science and technology. Also, the "G7 Ise-Shima vision for Global Health", which was adopted under Japan's initiative, refers to women's health and endorses the need for achieving universal health coverage (UHC) to ensure health services to all individuals throughout life-course. At the first G7 summit after the adoption of SDGs, Japan, as the presidency, included Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the agendas at all relevant Ministerial Meetings of G7 Ise-Shima Summit, in line with the policy of gender mainstreaming of SDGs.
- ▶ Under the Italian G7 Presidency, G7 Taormina Summit was held in May 2017. In the Leaders' Communiqué, leaders remain committed to mainstreaming gender equality into all policies and adopted "G7 Roadmap for a Gender-Responsive Economic Environment" to foster the economic empowerment of women and girls.
- ▶ In November 2017, the G7 Ministerial Meeting on Gender Equality was held for the first time under the G7 framework in Taormina, Italy. The meeting was attended by the ministers and authorities responsible for gender equality from the G7 countries (Japan, U.S., U.K., Italy, Canada, Germany, France) and the EU. Discussions on various issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment facing the international community were held, and the Declaration of the Ministers on gender equality was issued.





- ▶ G20 Hamburg Summit was held in July 2017 in which the launch of the Women Entrepreneurs Financing Initiative (We-Fi) was announced by the World Bank Group and 13 countries who had expressed their participation in the Initiative. Japan expressed its intention to contribute US \$50 million to this Initiative. Germany also hosted W20 in April on the four themes of “Labor Market Inclusion”, “Financial Inclusion”, “Digital Inclusion”, “Strengthening the W20”. W20 was launched in 2015 as an engagement group of the G20 in order to achieve gender inclusive global economic development.
- ▶ In July 2017, the Government of Japan became a party to the UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol which aims to prevent, suppress and combat such crimes as well as to facilitate international cooperation to protect victims. Through the conclusion of the Protocol, the Government has enhanced its cooperation with foreign governments to jointly address trafficking in persons, which women and children are prone to become victims.

### <Column>

JICA has been promoting “gender mainstreaming,” a comprehensive approach to incorporate the perspective of gender in all stages of planning, formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation in all programs and projects to clarify gender-based development issues. JICA is focusing on five priority areas to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment: 1) promoting women’s economic empowerment, 2) ensuring women’s rights and security, 3) promoting women’s education and lifetime health, 4) promoting gender responsive governance, 5) promoting gender responsive infrastructure.

#### “Project on Capacity Development on Assisting Victims of Trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-regional Countries (2015-2019) “

The issues concerning trafficking in persons (TIP) are getting increasingly serious in the Greater Mekong Sub-region. Women and children, both girls and boys, are especially vulnerable and trafficked women may require different support as they may be trafficked for brokered marriage and sexual exploitation. JICA has been working on TIP issues since 2005 through developing Technical Cooperation Projects in the Region, focusing mainly on “protection and reintegration of trafficked persons” and “prevention of trafficking.”

In Thailand, JICA carried out “Project on Strengthening of Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs) for Protection of Trafficked Persons (2009-2014)” and supported the capacity development of Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs) consisted of police, prosecutors, and social workers, in which various agencies and experts work together to tackle the issue. Continuously, “Project on Capacity Development on Assisting Victims of Trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-regional Countries (2015-2019)” has been implemented for the victim’s “Social Reintegration”, and organizing trainings and workshops particularly in the border areas with Laos in order to strengthen the capacity of MDTs of both Thai and Lao sides. Also, the Project puts efforts for educational activities. The campaign on Anti-Human Trafficking Day conducted in cooperation with provincial MDTs in Chiang Rai Province on June 2017 is one of the activities.

Besides Thailand, JICA carried out “Project for the Establishment of Anti-Trafficking in Persons Hotline (2012-2016)” in Vietnam and “Project on Capacity Improvement of Recovery and Reintegration Assistance for Trafficked Persons (2012-2015)” in Myanmar and it is currently preparing for the next phase respectively. In addition, the training program “Promotion of Networking among ASEAN Countries on Anti-human Trafficking” is organized in Japan every year inviting officials from related organizations in ASEAN countries, and comprehensive support for strengthening the regional cooperation is explored.



Workshop at the border area with Laos



Campaign on Anti-Human Trafficking Day at Chiang Rai Province

Photo: JICA