

14. International Cooperation

- In September 2013, **Prime Minister Abe expressed his intention to strengthen support for realizing “A Society where Women Shine” in his address at the 68th session of the United Nations General Assembly.** In 2016, he announced that Japan would implement ODA in excess of \$3 billion over the three years from 2016 to 2018, based on the three pillars: 1) promoting 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. Japan has fully implemented it.
- **The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** 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 Abe in May 2016, and formulated “The SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles” in December, as Japan’s national strategy for the implementation of the SDGs. The Headquarters decided the “SDGs Action Plan 2018” in December 2017, stipulating the basic three directions of Japan’s SDGs Model; promotion of “Society 5.0” that corresponds to SDGs, regional vitalization, and empowerment of next generations and women. In December 2018, the Headquarters decided the “SDGs Action Plan 2019” building upon the previous Action Plan, to further strengthen and expand Japan’s efforts to promote 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 states that services should be provided in 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) improving an enabling environment for women and girls to reach their full potentials, and 3) advancing 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 which is being steadily implemented. 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 has been achieved.
- 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. Also at the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in October 2018, Japan reemphasized the importance of promoting women’s economic, social and political empowerment.



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

- 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, 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.
- 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 on **dispatching a Japanese staff to the NATO Headquarters as Japan-NATO cooperation in the field of women, peace and security** in the meeting. 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 the 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.
- 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 quality 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 quality was issued.
- Under the German G20 Presidency, **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. **Women 20 (W20) Summit was held in Buenos Aires in October 2018 under the focus topics of "Labor Inclusion", "Digital Inclusion", "Financial Inclusion", and "Rural Development"**. W20 was launched in 2015 under the Turkish presidency as a G20 engagement group in order to achieve gender inclusive global economic development.

- In July 2017, **the Government of Japan concluded 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.
- In November 2017, Japan held the fourth **World Assembly for Women (WAW!)** with 2,400 participants and 64 top leaders and experts from all over the world discussed gender mainstreaming in different fields.



WAW! 2017
(Photo provided: Cabinet Public Information Office)

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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 2009 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 has actively put efforts for knowledge sharing in the Region, and organized the 8th “Mekong Regional Workshop” in March 2018 in which “effective social reintegration” was discussed among the concerned officials and practitioners from the Mekong countries.

Besides Thailand, JICA started “Project for Strengthening the Operation of Hotline for Counseling and Supporting Trafficked Survivors (2018-2021)” in Vietnam and “Project on Capacity Development and Promotion of Networking on Assisting Victims of Trafficking (2018-2021)” in Myanmar, as the second 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 and practitioners 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