

# Framework

## for the Promotion of Gender Equality

### I-1 Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society

Women in Japan  
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The Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society was promulgated and enacted in June 1999.

The Basic Law provides five basic principles for the realization of a gender-equal society, and stipulates the roles of the State, local governments and citizens for their respective responsibilities.

#### 5 Basic Principles

##### 1 Respect for the Human Rights of Women and Men

It is necessary to respect the dignity of women and men as individuals, to abolish gender-based discrimination, and to secure opportunities for women and men to exercise their abilities as individuals.

##### 2 Consideration to Social Systems or Practices

It is necessary to consider the modification of social systems or practices so that women and men can take part in various social activities, being free from the stereotyped perception of gender roles.

##### 3 Joint Participation in Planning and Deciding Policies

It is necessary to secure opportunities in which both men and women can participate in the decision making of various policies as equal partners in society.

##### 4 Compatibility of Activities in Family Life and Other Activities

It is necessary to enable men and women to act as equal family members, while cooperating with each other, receiving support from society, and fulfilling their role in the family, and to work and take part in learning and to participate in activities in local communities.

##### 5 International Cooperation

It is important to move forward together with international society to create a gender-equal society. It is necessary to make efforts in cooperation with other countries and international organizations.

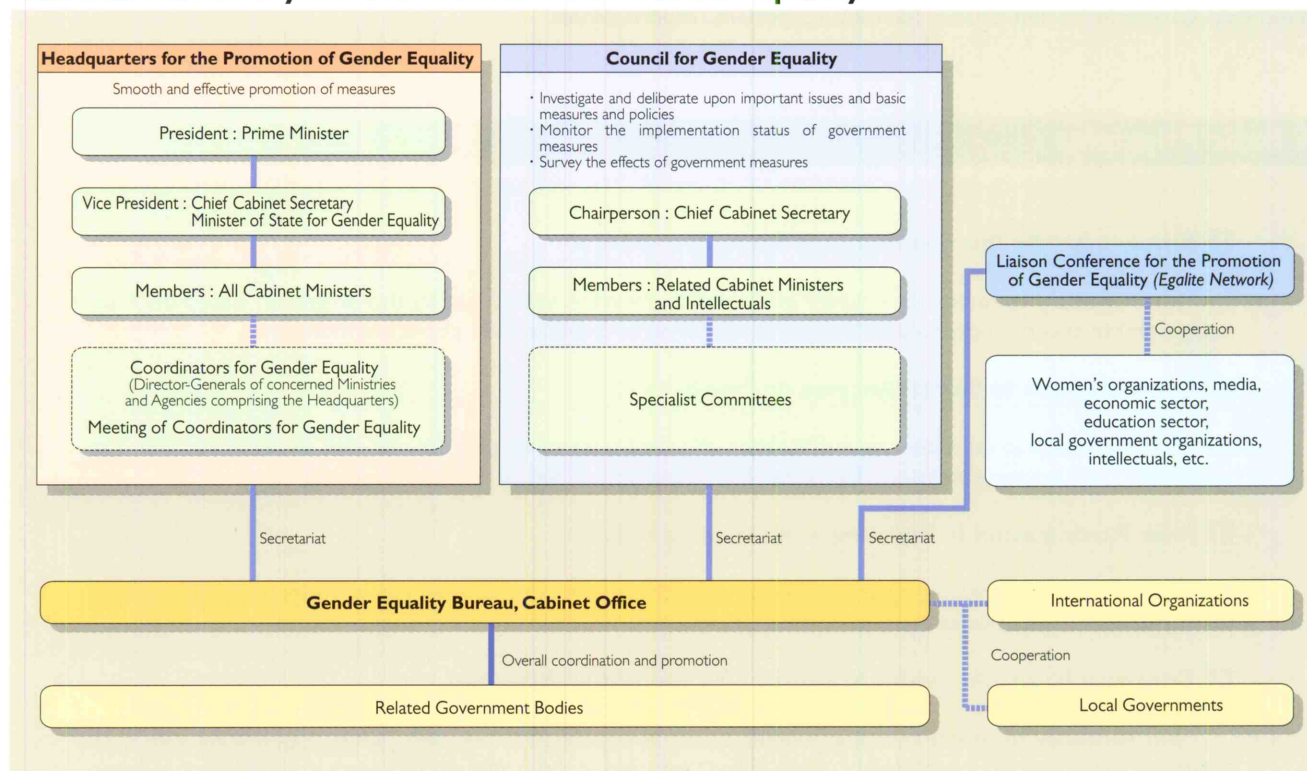
#### Responsibilities of the State, Local Governments and Citizens

- The State shall, based on the basic principles, formulate and implement comprehensive measures for the formation of a gender-equal society, including the formulation of the Basic Plan for Gender Equality and positive action/temporary special measures.
- Local governments shall, corresponding to national measures, implement the measures for the formation of a gender-equal society based on the basic principles and shall develop measures in accordance with the nature of the local community.
- Citizens are expected to cooperate in the formation of a gender-equal society.

## I-2 National Machinery for the Promotion of the Formation of a Gender-equal Society

Since January 2001, the national machinery for the promotion of gender equality in Japan has been enhanced and strengthened, by establishing the Council for Gender Equality and Gender Equality Bureau.

### National Machinery for the Promotion of Gender Equality



#### Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality

The Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality (hereinafter referred to as "Headquarters") was established for the smooth and effective promotion of measures regarding the formation of a gender-equal society. The Prime Minister serves as the president of the Headquarters, and the Chief Cabinet Secretary and Minister of State for Gender Equality serve as vice presidents. It comprises all cabinet ministers, and high level government officials such as director general of the member ministries/agencies are appointed by the president, as coordinators for gender equality. A meeting of coordinators for gender equality is held for mutual cooperation between member ministries/agencies.

#### Gender Equality Bureau

The Gender Equality Bureau of the Cabinet Office has the function as the secretariat for the Headquarters and the Council for Gender Equality. It undertakes planning and overall coordination of various matters related to the promotion of the formation of a gender-equal society.

Moreover, it compiles the "Annual Report on the State of Formation of a Gender-equal Society" (white paper), undertakes studies and research, publicizes and promotes the Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society, enlightens the public about the Law, and cooperates with local governments, NGOs, and international organizations.

#### Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality (Egalite Network)

The Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality, formed from experts in all sectors of society, undertakes activities towards the realization of a gender-equal society, such as widespread provision of information and opinion exchange.

## Minister of State for Gender Equality

The Minister of State for Gender Equality is responsible for planning and overall coordination of basic policies on promoting gender equality.

In the past, the Chief Cabinet Secretary served as the Minister of Gender Equality. In October 2005, the Prime Minister has appointed a minister to take charge and focus solely on gender equality and social affairs. The minister serves as the vice president of the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality with the Chief Cabinet Secretary and is also a member of the Council for Gender Equality.

## I-3 Council for Gender Equality

The Council for Gender Equality is chaired by the Chief Cabinet Secretary and comprises 12 cabinet ministers designated by the Prime Minister and 12 intellectuals appointed by the Prime Minister.

The Council has the following specialist committees.

### Council for Gender Equality and its specialist committees

#### Specialist Committee on Basic Issues

Studies and deliberates basic perceptions of gender equality and individual, priority issues of great concern to people and closely related to the basic perceptions (from May 2001)

##### REPORTS

"Interim Report on Deliberation on a System that Gives a Married Couple an Option to Retain Separate Surnames" (October 2001).

"Measures to Support Women's Challenges" (April 2003).

#### Specialist Committee on Violence against Women

Studies and deliberates on measures for the future while considering each of the fields, violence from husbands or partners, sexual crimes, prostitution, sexual harassment, and stalking behavior (from April 2001)

##### REPORTS

"Towards Smooth Enforcement of the Law for the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims" (October 2001, April 2002)

"Reports on How the Law for the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims is enforced and so forth" (June 2003).

"Tasks to be tackled on Violence against Women and Measures to it" (March 2004).

#### Council for Gender Equality

Chairperson: Chief Cabinet Secretary

Council members: 12 cabinet ministers designated by the Prime Minister, and 12 intellectuals appointed by the Prime Minister.

#### Specialist Committee on Monitoring and Gender Impact Assessment and Evaluation

Studies and deliberates whether the Basic Plan for Gender Equality is being steadily implemented in each ministry and agency, as well as on government measures and other matters affecting the formation of a gender-equal society, in order to reflect the viewpoints of gender equality to every social system (from July 2004).

#### Specialist Committee on the Declining Birthrate and Gender Equality

Studies and deliberates on the relation between the declining birthrate and gender equality, through analyzing statistical data, etc. (from July 2004).

##### REPORTS

"International Comparison of the Social Environments declining Birthrates and Gender- Equality" (September 2005)