Creating “A Society Where Women Shine”

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan
Prime Minister Abe has addressed women’s empowerment at the UN General Assembly, the World Assembly for Women, and elsewhere.

**GLOBAL LEADERS MEETING ON GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT** at UN General Assembly  (Sep 2015)
- Japan enacted new law to promote active engagement of women in society
  - To create a society where it is commonplace for both men and women to share responsibility for work, household chores, and child rearing
  - Will address challenges associated with aging society and low birthrate while still realizing economic growth

- “Abenomics is "womenomics“ – Prime Minister Abe has consistently promoted the dynamic engagement of women
- From April 2016, companies required to draw up and announce voluntary action plans incorporating targets to promote hiring women and appointment of women to executive positions

**General Assembly of the United Nations (Sep 2014)**
- “We must foster environments in which it is possible to balance child care and nursing care on the one hand and work on the other.”
- We must eliminate biases about roles of women that still exist in society.
Women’s Empowerment is critical to ABENOMICS (1)

Active Participation of Women

- Increasing workforce population
- Talented human resources
- New products/services

Necessity

Economic Growth

Women’s labour force participation rate by age group

- 3.03 million women (2014)
- Biggest Potential Power
Women’s Empowerment is critical to ABENOMICS (2)

Impact of raising Women’s Labor Participation Rate

- If female labor force participation rates converge with male rate by 2030, labor supply would decline by only 5%, increasing GDP by almost 20% compared with unchanged participation rates. \((OECD, \text{April} \ 2015)\)

- Closing gender gap could boost Japanese GDP by up to 13\% \((Goldman \ Sachs, \text{April} \ 2014)\)

- G7 (excluding Italy and Japan) level \Rightarrow \text{GDP per capita will be permanently 4\% higher} \((IMF, \text{October} \ 2012)\)

Assuming that the labor force participation rate for men remains constant from 2011 to 2030.
KPIs by 2020
- Increase women in leading positions to 30%
- Increase employment rate of women to 73%
  (age 25-44) (2012 rate: 68%)

Incentives to women-friendly companies
(Subsidy, Tax, Award, Disclosure of Information)

Supporting women according to life stages
(Childrearing, Reemployment, Entrepreneurship)

Creating an environment for balancing between work and child-rearing
(Teleworking, Expanding Childcare)
Increase of Benefit (Effective from April 1, 2014)

Raise childcare leave benefits 50% \(\Rightarrow\) 67% of wage prior to leave (for 6 months from the start of leave) Further promoting both men and women to take childcare leave.

Reference: Percentage of employees taking childcare leave (2013): Males 2.03%, Females 83.0%

* Given that childcare leave benefits are tax exempt and that social insurance premiums are waived during period of childcare leave, the effective benefit percentage is about 80% (compared to wages prior to taking leave, less tax & social insurance premiums)
On August 28th and 29th, Japan held the 2-day World Assembly for Women (WAW! 2015) in Tokyo.

- **75 leaders** active in women’s empowerment area from **41 countries/regions, 8 international orgs** participated (70 Japanese, 145 in total)
- **315 people from abroad** visited Japan for WAW! About **2,000 total in attendance**

### Public Forum - August 28th

**Opening Remarks from Prime Minister Shinzo Abe**
- Presented **new bill** just passed to promote active engagement of women in society.
- Announced that Japan will implement over **42 billion yen** in **ODA** toward high-quality **education for women & girls**

**Powerful messages from Keynote Speakers**
- **Ellen Johnson Sirleaf**, President of Republic of Liberia; first female president chosen democratically in Africa.
- **Marillyn A. Hewson**, Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer, Lockheed Martin Corporation; started career at Lockheed Martin; broke through glass ceiling to become CEO

### Active Discussion in Two Focused Panel Discussions
- Girls’ Education
- Women and the Economy
On 29 August, active discussions were held by participants under two themes: **Women and the Economy** and **Global Issues**

As part of this year’s new efforts, 6 special sessions were also held.

### High-Level Round Table and Special Sessions
**August 29th**

- **Women and the Economy**
  - Engaging Men in Reforms
  - Women Facing Challenges
- **Global Issues**
  - Girls and Education
  - Women and Peacebuilding

### Special Sessions
- **Women's Empowerment through Sanitation**
- **Women in the field of Natural Science**
- **Implementing Diversity and Innovation**
- **Youth Table**
- **Supporting Women Entrepreneurs across Asia**
- **Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction**

Discussions led to **concrete proposals**. Prime Minister attended sessions and joined to the discussions.

### Summit Meetings and Courtesy Call
**August 28th and 29th**

- Japan-Liberia Summit Meeting
- Courtesy Call from Groups (North America, Europe, Asia, Oceania & Latin America, Middle East Asia & Africa)
- Lunch meeting with international organization high-level participants
- Dinner meeting with public sector participants
A “WAW! To Do 2015” list was compiled by the Chair based on proposals and ideas from WAW! 2015 participants. (Please check “WAW!2015” MOFA website for details)

“WAW! To Do 2015” (UN document: A/C.3/70/3)

Work-Life Management / Engaging Men in Reforms
• Change “Long Working Hours”
• Leaders introduce change and expand women`s empowerment networks
• Promote education to develop individuals` abilities
• Design New and Flexible Working Styles Utilizing Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
• Implement Diversity in Organizations Leading to Innovation
• Further Support Women Entrepreneurs across Asia
Women Facing Challenges
• Promote active utilization and enhancement of support systems
• Reinforce actions to support single mothers

Girls and Education
• Work to enable all girls to finish equal and quality primary and secondary education
• Enhance necessary resources in both public and private sector
• Overcome negative social images and increase female students in the field of natural science
Peacebuilding and Women
- Promote women’s active participation in peacebuilding processes
- Promote participation of women in the countries/regions concerned
- Enhance women’s rights restoration & empowerment in recovery process
- Mobilize women’s leadership in disaster risk reduction

Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships for International Cooperation
- Build plans, budgets, and data respecting women
- Empower women through adequate sanitation

What Youth can do to Realize the Society they Visualize
- Promote open discussion and take actions based on own values
Various events exemplified this year’s theme: “WAW! for All” on 28 and 29 August.

**WAW! for All**

**WAW! Participants and Audience**

*<Collected/sent messages via YouTube and photo booth>*

**WAW! for All Generations**

*<Youth discussions held at “Youth Table”. Students joined as audience as well>*

**Introduced Japanese Culture**

*<Tea Ceremony as side event of lunch meeting>*

**WAW for All: Engaging Men**

*<30% of participants were men who engaged in discussions together>*
Japan’s Initiatives to realize “A Society Where Women Shine”

In address to UN General Assembly (Sep 2013), PM Abe pledged implementation of ODA in excess of $3 billion over 3 years (2013-2015) for women's empowerment and gender equality. Approximately $1.86 billion was implemented in 2013.

• Strengthen assistance to improve women’s living environment
  • Increasing girls’ enrollment rate, providing vocational training, maintaining water-supply systems in villages.

• Strengthen cooperation with the private sector
  • Use ODA to promote BOP businesses to contribute to women’s empowerment and participation in society

• Strengthen cooperation with NGOs

• Strengthen cooperation with relevant international organizations (UN Women, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, etc.).

Examples of Concrete Actions

Facilitating women’s active role / participation in society and women’s empowerment

[Example] Bangladesh • Pirojpur District: Promoting the empowerment of women
  ● Implemented by Japanese NGO “Children Without Borders”
  ● Provides support for education in Asia
  ● Pirojpur District: poor, located in river delta, vulnerable to natural disasters
  ● Women have lower status and limited opportunities; necessary to create opportunities for women to work and earn income in sectors other than agriculture and fisheries.
  ● Aim of the project: Set up cooperatives for women; strengthen their marketing skills

Supporting women’s participation and protecting women’s human rights in peace & security

[Example] The Philippines: Project on Rehabilitation and Recovery from Typhoon Yolanda
  ● Aim of the project: Build resilient communities during reconstruction after Typhoon Yolanda and attach great importance to the empowerment of women for the rebuilding of livelihood in areas affected by Typhoon Yolanda.