

Summary of Third Basic Plan for Gender Equality (Approved by the Cabinet in December 2010)

Part I Core Concepts

The endeavor to create a gender-equal society that is livable for both men and women is of the utmost importance for the Japanese government to tackle as a whole. The society we should be aiming for is a society that is ① gender-equal, free of stereotyped perception for gender roles, ② a place where the human rights of men and women are respected, where individuals can live with dignity, ③ made vibrant and rich in diversity, by men and women demonstrating their individuality and abilities, and ④ recognized internationally for gender equality.

What we in Japan have been doing is to support a number of initiatives by women, in the same way as is occurring internationally, while also promoting the creation of a gender-equal society by steps like enacting the Basic Act for a Gender-equal Society (Act No. 78 of 1999), expanding and strengthening ‘national machinery’ including the Council for Gender Equality (the “Council”) and initiatives based on the Basic Plans for Gender Equality. But in reality, gender equality in Japan remains a work in progress, and a number of outstanding issues have been pinpointed in even the latest United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (“CEDAW”) concluding observations on Japan (adopted in August 2009).

It is also true that Japan must create a gender-equal society to solve problems caused by phenomena like economic and social globalization and changed social conditions. These include the advent of Japan’s aging society and declining birthrate, changes in the Japanese family and regional communities, the prolonged recession and deepened sense of despair, increases in the number of non-regular workers and widening poverty and wealth disparity.

The Third Basic Plan for Gender Equality (the “Third Basic Plan”) is therefore formulated as a practical action plan for further accelerating the development of gender equality in Japan. The Third Basic Plan draws from the July 2010 Council report entitled “Basic Vision for Formulating the Third Basic Plan for Gender Equality”.

1 Basic Approaches

The following basic approaches undergird the Third Basic Plan:

- ① Given the reflections in the Council’s report on the decade since the Basic Act came into effect, the Third Basic Plan, so far as is possible, clearly establishes specific numerical targets and deadlines, and will regularly monitor progress towards them.
- ② The Third Basic Plan aims to reform social systems and structures based on stereotypical assumptions about the gender-based division of roles while promoting close government-wide cooperation across agencies working on related policies, such as the Work-Life Balance, Child and Child-Rearing Support, Child and Youth Support, and Human Rights policies.
- ③ The Third Basic Plan examines matters raised in the latest CEDAW concluding observations and strives for international harmonization, giving weight to international ideas and perspectives on gender through measures such as active observance and domestic implementation of international criteria and standards. At the same time, the Third Basic Plan also considers other factors, like Japanese culture and social conditions.

2 New Emphases

The Third Basic Plan places new emphasis on:

① Revitalizing the economy and society through women's active participation

It is essential for Japan to make use of a diverse range of human resources in order to revitalize the Japanese economy and society, in particular women, as Japan's labor force shrinks due to the declining birth rate. And securing opportunities for women to participate in the economy and society through the full expression of their abilities is not only essential in terms of the perspective of increasing the labor supply, but also in order to continually create new value in a climate of globalization and the diversification of consumer needs.

② Gender equality for men and children

Since gender equal societies respect diverse lifestyles and allow all people to participate actively in all aspects of society, and are livable societies for men too, it is essential to grasp gender equality from the male perspective. We need to actively influence men towards understanding gender equality so that we can review the way men work, such as by curbing long working hours, and respond to issues that affect men, like the family care issues men face.

We also need to promote understanding of gender equality from childhood, with the aim of striving for a new generation of leaders who grow up healthy, with a sense of self that is primed for the future, and a society where they can live happily. The problem of children who need support, including children from single parent families, or who are victims of sexual crimes has also become evident in recent years, and society as a whole needs to support children, in order to build an environment where they can live in safety, with confidence.

③ Responses to people facing a variety of difficulties

Increased numbers of Japanese face poverty, whether due to the rise in families left behind due to unaccompanied postings and single parent families, changes in hiring and workforce entry, the globalization of the economy and society or other factors. Women are vulnerable to hardship due to poverty arising from factors like working lives interrupted by bearing and raising children, and employment that is often non-regular. And it is not uncommon for women to be facing multiple challenges, such as those with disabilities and non-Japanese women living and working in Japan.

Propelling gender equality forward through steps like promoting gender equality in the family and local communities and women-friendly reforms to the way work is structured, is an essential part of our response to people facing a variety of difficulties.

④ Elimination of all forms of violence against women

Violence against women is a serious violation of human rights and a crucial issue to be surmounted in order to progress towards creating a gender-equal society. We need to engage in broad-scale promotion of a wide range of initiatives designed to eliminate violence against women, tailored to its various forms and including preventative measures and victim support. At the same time, we need to prepare the foundations for elimination, including through exhaustive social awareness of the fact that violence will not be tolerated.

⑤ Promotion of gender equality at the local communities

As the Japanese family undergoes changes like the weakening of personal ties in local communities and the rise in families left behind due to unaccompanied postings, it is important to create strong local communities where everyone contributes and belongs, whether male or female. It is essential that we implement a range of initiatives at the local 'grassroots' level, right where people live.

3 Pressing Future Issues

Given the new perspectives emphasized above, the issues to be tackled over the next 5-year planning period that we ought to attack with particular urgency are:

① Promoting effective positive action

It is essential for us to strengthen and accelerate our efforts to achieve the target of “increasing the share of women in leadership positions to at least 30% by 2020 in all fields in society” (the “‘30% by 2020’ target” decided by the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality on June 20, 2003). We will promote a variety of effective positive action measures tailored to the area and subject, including quota systems, the granting of incentives, and ‘goal and timetable’ methods.

② Realizing social systems that allow more diverse lifestyles

As the social functions and individual lifestyles of men and women diversify, we need to construct systems that are neutral in terms of their effect on the choices men and women make about the roles they will adopt in society. We will review systems and traditions based on a stereotyped perception for gender roles, so that we transition from systems and traditions based on household units that assume a sole male provider to those based on the individual.

To make sure gender equality principles are reflected in every possible kind of policy, we will work at expanding gender-based statistics (gender statistics) to obtain an objective grasp of the situations men and women are facing. At the same time, we will carry out surveys and research to evaluate, in economic and social terms, issues like gender-related budgets, and the burden of child rearing and family care on families.

③ Rebuilding employment and safety nets

We will progress initiatives to address employment issues so as to enable women to continue working, and to secure a living wage, most notably the elimination of gender-based wage disparity and the M-shaped pattern of women’s labor force participation (the “M-curve” issue), controls on long working hours and issues around non-regular employment.

We will promote the rebuilding of safety nets in response to the decline in the mutual support provided by the family and local communities, and the ongoing provision of services suited to a variety of individual lifestyles, partly in order to prevent hardship passing from generation to generation. And we will provide appropriate support to women who face multiple additional challenges due to having disabilities or being foreign residents of Japan.

④ Enhancing systems for promoting gender equality

We need to take our domestic capacity to make progress on gender equality a step further in order to realize a gender-equal society. In order for Japan’s national machinery to realize its full potential, we will implement measures that include enhancing its overall planning and proposal drafting role, its lateral coordination role and its role in overseeing the implementation of the Third Basic Plan and the latest CEDAW concluding observations. At the same time, we will ensure that the principles of gender equality are reflected in every kind of government policy.

We will enhance efforts aimed at systematic liaison designed to support the initiatives of local government and private bodies and enable each body to fulfill its role to the utmost.

4 Structure of the Third Basic Plan

The Third Basic Plan is made up of this first part, Part I “Core Concepts”, Part II “Basic Policy Directions and Specific Measures” and Part III “Implementation of the Plan”.

In Part II, we list 15 priority fields for promoting gender equality and set out our “Basic Approach” for each. In these “Basic Approach” sections, we describe our long-term policy directions through to 2020 under the heading “Basic Policy Directions” and the specific measures we will implement by the end of fiscal 2015 under the headings “Basic Policy Directions” and “Specific Measures”.

We also indicate our “Performance Objectives” under each priority field so as to ensure this action plan is effective. These targets are the benchmarks the government as a whole aims to achieve through the broad-scale implementation of the specific measures listed under each priority field. And where the institutions, bodies and other groups directly involved in efforts related to these targets are groups external to the national government, like local governments and private bodies, when the government asks these institutions, bodies and other groups to take action, the benchmarks they are asked to meet will be those set by the government.

Part III of the plan describes the coordination and strengthening of systems for promoting these initiatives in a comprehensive and systematic manner.

Part II Basic Policy Directions and Specific Measures

Priority field 1 Expansion of women’s participation in policy decision-making processes

<Basic Approach >

Women comprise half the population and just over 40% of the labor force, shouldering roles in politics, the economy, society and numerous other fields. Yet women’s participation in policy-making and planning processes in these fields remains at sluggish levels a decade after the enactment of the Basic Act for a Gender-equal Society.

Expanding women’s participation in the political arena is particularly important. It is essential, in democratic societies, for men and women to share responsibility by participating actively in political decision-making processes, so that political and social policy-making and planning reflect diverse opinions in a fair and impartial manner, and men and women enjoy equal benefits. Social systems are being redesigned and radically rethought in the face of the stark reality of rapid demographic change due to the declining birthrate and aging society. It is important, when that happens, to ensure that policies and planning aimed at promoting gender-equal participation are reflected in the issues that are given political priority, starting with the issues that concern women.

In economic circles too, we need to recognize the role women play in driving the economy. This will mean we capitalize on the abilities of a diverse range of human resources and create and expand opportunities for women to engage in economic activity so that Japan maintains a sustainable and richly diverse prosperity into the future. But women’s participation in economic activity in Japan is not only meager in comparison to other developed countries, it is barely making progress.

The government has tackled this issue to date by setting specific numerical targets in fields where the government can take direct action to meet the “30% by 2020” target set under the Second Basic Plan for Gender Equality (Approved by the Cabinet on December 27, 2005), such as for women who are national public servants or on national advisory councils and committees. But the response to the government’s request that political parties, private enterprise and other bodies implement specific measures has been unenthusiastic.

Yet expanding women’s participation in policy-making and planning processes is a pressing issue for Japanese

society, and the need is particularly urgent in the fields of politics and the economy. Japanese society as a whole needs to share ownership of the “30% by 2020” target, with the public and private sectors working together to make it a reality.

The government will be enhancing and accelerating initiatives like promoting effective positive action through setting specific numerical targets and deadlines tailored to factors such as the distinctive nature of each field and implementing institution or body. At the same time, we will also be working with political and business circles to ask for their understanding, and urging them to take proactive steps.

<Performance Objectives>*Overlapping objectives among fields are described in the first appearance

- Proportion of female candidates to be members of the House of Representatives: 16.7% (2009) → 30% (2020)
- Proportion of female candidates to be members of the House of Councilors: 22.9% (2010) → 30% (2020)
- Proportion of female public prosecutors: 18.2% (2009) → 23% (end of fiscal 2015)
- Proportion of female national public employees through the recruitment examination: 26.1% (fiscal 2010) → approx. 30% (end of fiscal 2015)
- Proportion of female national public employees through the Level I recruitment examination (University graduate level) for national civil service: 25.7% (fiscal 2010) → approx. 30%
- Proportion of women in government positions equivalent to or higher than director of central government regional organizations or assistant director of central government ministries and agencies: 5.1% (fiscal 2008) → approx. 10% (end of fiscal 2015)
- Proportion of women in government positions equivalent to or higher than the director of the central government ministries and agencies: 2.2% (fiscal 2008) → approx. 5% (end of fiscal 2015)
- Proportion of women in positions equivalent to designated central government positions: 1.7% (fiscal 2008) → approx. 3% (end of fiscal 2015)
- Percentage of male national public employees who take child care leave: 0.7% (fiscal 2008) → 13% (2020)
- Proportion of female members in national advisory councils and committees: 33.2% (2009) → between 40% and 60% (2020)
- Proportion of female expert members in national advisory councils and committees: 16.5% (2009) → 30% (2020)
- Proportion of female local public employees through the recruitment examination: 21.3% (2008) → approx. 30% (end of fiscal 2015)
- Proportion of women in positions equivalent to or higher than director of prefectural or city government office: 5.7% (2009) → approx. 10% (end of fiscal 2015)
- Percentage of male local public employees who take child care leave: 0.6% (fiscal 2008) → 13% (2020)
- Proportion of female members of prefectural or city government advisory councils and committees: 28.4% (2009) → 30% (2015)
- Proportion of female members of city, town, or village government advisory councils and committees: 23.3% (2009) → 30% (2015)
- Proportion of women in positions equivalent to or higher than section manager level in private corporations: 6.5% (2009) → approx. 10% (2015)

Expanding women's participation in policy-making and planning processes is crucial in order to realize a gender-equal society, and the time left to reach the "30% by 2020" target is short. This means that the government needs to also set interim targets for 2015. We will draft measures to expand women's participation in policy-making and planning across all areas of government in order to reach the target, including through considering and implementing a diverse range of positive action measures, dispelling stereotyped perception for gender roles, reforming women's own beliefs and actions including through education and offering women role models, and promoting work-life balance.

In particular, the government will focus on setting an example in expanding women's participation in the policy-making and planning processes by achieving the target in the employment and promotion to managerial ranks of women in the national public service. These efforts will be subject to the guidance of the National Personnel Authority and the principles of equal treatment and merit prescribed in the National Public Service Act.

The government will also approach political and economic circles to seek understanding of the promotion of effective positive action measures and to encourage positive initiatives.

Priority field 2 Reconsideration of social systems and practices and raise awareness from a gender equal perspective

< Basic Approach >

In order to create a gender-equal society we need to be always examining the kinds of impacts that social systems and traditions are actually having on men and women. Although each of these systems and traditions grew up for a purpose and has its own history, if we examine them from the perspective of gender equality, some illustrate differences in status between men and women. This means the impact of these systems and traditions on men and women is not neutral, even if they do not make express gender-based distinctions.

As the roles men and women adopt in society and individual lifestyles diversify, we need to build systems that are neutral in terms of the social roles men and women choose to adopt. The key perspective is to transition from the system and tradition of household units that assume a sole male provider, to those based on the individual, and to building a society where men and women can both take responsibility for working and for the family.

Japan is now redesigning and radically rethinking social systems in response to rapid social and economic change. As this happens we will review social systems and traditions from the stance of gender equality in order to realize a society where both men and women can make flexible lifestyle choices.

In addition, we will promote surveys and research into the effect government policy is having on creating a gender-equal society. This will be done in tandem with an effective publicity and education campaign designed to increase understanding of issues like eliminating the stereotypical assumptions about gender roles that are behind social systems and traditions and the legal system required to create a gender-equal society.

< Performance Objectives >

- Awareness of the term "gender-equal society" : 64.6% (2009) → 100% (2015)
- Awareness of the term "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" : 35.1% (2009) → no less than 50% (2015)
- Awareness of the term "work-life balance" : 37.0% (2009) → no less than 50% (2015)
- Time spent on housework and child care by husbands with a child or children less than six years old: 60 min. a day

<Basic Policy Directions>

1 Reviewing social systems and traditions from the perspective of gender equality

We will take a fresh look at social systems and traditions that are neutral in terms of their effect on respect for diverse lifestyles and lifestyle choices. When we do, we need take the perspective of responding to changes in the shape of the family, like the growth of the nuclear family, dual income households, staying single and divorce, and families left behind due to unaccompanied postings, as well as to the diversification of lifestyles. We will also need to prioritize transitioning from household units that assume a sole male provider to customs and traditions based on the individual, building a society where men and women can both take responsibility for working and the family, and actively observing and strengthening domestic implementation of international norms and standards. It is also important for us to review systems that have the capacity to encourage women into work, and to prepare structures and environments that lead to financial independence during old age.

2 Developing widespread popular publicity and education campaigns

One significant barrier to achieving a gender-equal society is the popular belief in the stereotyped perception for gender roles that has developed in Japanese society over a long period of time. Although these types of beliefs are changing with the times, the fact that it still remains deeply ingrained means that the government will develop a proactive publicity and education campaign to dispel them, and to foster a deeper, permanent awareness of gender equality.

We will also be enhancing measures to obtain the understanding of the Japanese people in order to build a gender-equal society.

3 Promoting understanding of the principles, laws and systems related to respect for the human rights of men and women and expanding the provision of remedies and counseling

We will foster deeper understanding of the principle of respect for human rights and at the same time, promote understanding of laws and systems so that each person correctly understands issues like their own guaranteed legal rights and measures available when their rights have been violated. And we will strive to expand the systems dealing with complaints to government policies and providing relief and advice for victims of human infringement.

4 Gathering, processing and providing surveys, research and information on gender equality

Surveys and research into gender equality, and the gathering, processing and provision of information are basic preliminary requirements for the creation of a gender-equal society. This means that we will promote surveys and research into broad-scale, basic topics related to creating such a society. And we will carry out surveys that give us an objective grasp of the situations in which men and women find themselves, and enhancing the collection, processing and provision of statistical information, including statistics on work. When we carry out surveys and gather, process and provide statistical information, so far as is possible, we will identify gender-specific data on individuals, households, employees, users and other stakeholders, and we will publicly disclose that gender-specific data, after giving considering the wishes of users and the protection of privacy.

Priority field 3 Gender equality for men and children

<Basic Approach>

We will actively engage with men, and with the children and youth who are our future in order to broaden the support base for gender equality.

Even the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women has pointed out that men should fulfill an active role in

creating gender-equal societies. We will foster a deeper understanding that the building of a gender-equal society in which men and women can fulfill their individuality and abilities, each understanding their responsibilities while respecting the other's human rights, is important, not only for Japanese society as a whole but for Japanese men in particular, and will deliver lifestyle benefits for men. We will also be endeavoring to dispel men's own belief in stereotypical gender-based role divisions, at the same time promoting men's participation in the local community and family life through reviewing the way men work by controlling long working hours and other means.

It is vital for the children who are our future to grow up healthy, and able to fulfill their individuality and abilities. We will promote understanding of gender equality from childhood, and facilitating initiatives that enable children to develop a sense of self that is primed for the future. And the problem of children needing support, such as children who are from single-parent families and or victims of sexual crimes is becoming increasingly evident, so we will provide support to ensure an environment where they can live in safety, with confidence, and grow up healthy. We will also be promoting gender equality for children because fostering deeper understanding of gender equality in all children is something that benefits not only the children themselves, but leads to promoting gender equality across future Japanese society as a whole.

<Performance Objectives>

- Proportion of employees working 60 hours or more per week: 10.0% (2008) → 50% reduction (2020)
- Percentage of employees taking annual paid leave: 47.4% (2008) → 70% (2020)
- Percentage of men who take child care leave: 1.72% (2009) → 13% (2020)
- Number of corporations that have obtained the Next-Generation Accreditation mark ("Kurumin"): 920 (2010) → 2,000 (2014)
- Proportion of businesses that allow selection of reduced working hours (ex: system for reduced-hours regular employees): less than 8.6% (2005) → 29% (2020)
- Number of people teleworking at home: 3,300,000 (2008) → 7,000,000 (2015)
- Number of people who commit suicide per population of 100,000: 24.2 (2005) → 20% reduction (by 2016)
- Number of pediatric emergency medical zones that ensure uninterrupted medical treatment systems: 342 districts (fiscal 2008) → all pediatric emergency medical zones (fiscal 2014)
- Percentage of public junior high schools that provide opportunities for students to experience the workplace: 94.5% (2009) → 96% (2015)
- Percentage of public high schools (full-time) that offer internships: 72.6% (2009) → 75% (2015)

<Basic Policy Directions>

1 Gender equality for men

One significant barrier to achieving a gender-equal society is the popular belief in the stereotyped perception for gender roles that has developed in Japanese society over a long period of time. Although beliefs of this type are changing with the times, it remains just as deeply ingrained, particularly in men. We will carry out surveys and research into dispelling men's own belief in the stereotyped perception for gender roles in tandem with measures like providing awareness and education campaigns and advice for men.

We will promote environmental changes that allow men to participate, including in child care, family care and local community activities by reviewing issues like the way men work with the aim of creating a society when both men and women can balance life and work.

In addition, we will provide support to enable men who have reached retirement age to participate in local community and other activities.

2 Promoting understanding of gender equality and a sense of self primed for the future from childhood

We will promote understanding of gender equality from childhood so that the rising generation of children will be brought up able to fulfill their individuality and abilities, and take steps to give them a sense of self that is primed for the future. And we will move ahead with health and sex education so men and women can manage their own health appropriately for their health status and gender differences, not forgetting to take countermeasures against problems that have an immense impact on health.

3 Realizing a society where children can grow up healthy, safe and confident

We will prepare an environment and medical system designed to root out violence, so that children can grow up healthy. And we will drive initiatives where the entire society supports children, through measures such as preventing poverty by breaking the poverty cycle.

Priority field 4 Securing equal opportunities and treatment between men and women in employment

<Basic Approach>

We know that entering the workforce is the financial foundation for life and working engenders a sense of personal fulfillment. Creating a society where those who wish to work can give full expression to their abilities irrespective of gender leads to increased diversity and is of vital importance as a source of energy for the economy and society.

We need to take initiatives like correcting gender disparity through steps like promoting positive action, eliminating wage disparity between men and women, reviewing systems for the treatment of employees, and supporting women to enter and stay in jobs and find reemployment in order to solve the M-curve issue. And of course we need to secure the equal employment opportunity and treatment for men and women, which is the core principle of the Act on Securing, Etc. of Equal Opportunity and Treatment between Men and Women in Employment (Act No. 113 of 1972; the “Equal Employment Opportunity Law”).

On the one hand, non-regular employment like part time work caters for a diverse range of needs for job entry and so has positive significance in promoting the expression of women’s abilities. But on the other, given current conditions where the proportion of women in non-regular employment is higher than that for men, non-regular employment is one reason for women being vulnerable to poverty, and what is more, the gap between regular and non-regular employment is one reason for gender disparity problem. This means that further efforts are required to fine-tune the non-regular employment job environment.

In addition, we recognize the role women play as economic drivers apart from just in the employment field, and will make it possible for men and women to participate more actively, in a climate of equal opportunity, even in fields like starting a new business and independent business, in order to create opportunities for women’s economic activity.

<Performance Objectives>

- *Proportion of corporations taking on positive action: 30.2% (2009) → more than 40% (2014)*
- *Proportion of workers conducting self-development activities: Regular employees: 58.1%; Non-permanent employees: 37.3% (2007) → Regular employees: 70%; Non-permanent employees: 50% (2020)*
- *Employment rate for women between the ages of 25 and 44: 66.0% (2009) → 73% (2020)*
- *Rate of continued employment for women before and after delivering their first child: 38% (2005) → 55% (2020)*

<Basic Policy Directions>

1 Promoting measures to secure equal employment opportunity and treatment for men and women

We will strive to ensure full equality in opportunity and treatment for men and women, and at the same time, strive to resolve wage disparity gap between men and women in line with the purport of the Convention concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value (ILO Convention No. 100).

2 Fine-tuning the non-regular employment job environment

It is extremely important, in terms of efforts to promote the fulfillment of women's abilities, that workers are able to choose from a diverse and flexible range of working styles, and that each is guaranteed fair treatment and working conditions matching their duties and abilities.

Accordingly, in an effort to promote equal and balanced treatment aimed at equal pay for work of equal value, we will progress initiatives aimed at improving the quality of a diverse range of working styles, including through promoting the equal and balanced treatment of part-time workers and permanent employees.

3 Promoting positive action

We will enthusiastically promote positive action with the aim of securing the realization of substantive gender equality, and above all, to make it possible for women to give full scope to their abilities.

4 Support for promoting the expression of women's abilities

We will strive to dispel the stereotyped perception for gender roles that says men are the breadwinners and providers, and women's work is to supplement the family budget. And in order to increase women's employability, we will also actively promote measures like awareness and education, information provision and skill development campaigns that encourage women to make appropriate occupational choices.

5 Support to enable diverse lifestyles and the expression of diverse abilities

Working from the assumption that there are many ways to live, we will review support, structural preparations and systems that enable each person to bring their full ability to bear in the lifestyle of their choice.

6 Promoting efforts to solve the M-curve issue

We will provide support for women to enable those who want to continue working without interruption in circumstances like giving birth, child rearing or caring for family members so that people who want to work can bring their full capacity to bear to secure opportunities to participate in the economy and society, irrespective of gender, and promote improvements in job quality. And we will actively pursue a variety of relevant initiatives, in addition to securing equal employment opportunities and treatment for men and women at work, which will be aimed at eliminating the M-curve issue. These initiatives will include dispelling beliefs in the stereotyped perception for gender roles, and balancing work and life through measures like controlling long working hours and expanding policies that support child rearing.

7 Revitalization of the economy and society through women's active participation

Given the progressive decline in Japan's workforce due to the declining birthrate and aging society, we are seeing calls for those with latent skills to participate for the labor market. At the same time, we need to push ahead with creating new demand that can serve as a source of future economic growth.

On one view the participation of women in Japan lags behind other developed nations, but the converse view is that this means that as women's participation advances, and women become active in more fields, a vast amount of latent talent will be fulfilled.

Women playing an active role will lead to the revitalization of our national economy, so we will actively promote efforts designed to bring women's latent abilities to life. These efforts will include striving to dispel belief in the stereotyped perception for gender roles, which supporting a push for the full expression of women's talents, and at the same time

supporting women to remain in and re-enter the workforce, and women entrepreneurs, so as to eliminate the M-curve issue.

Priority field 5 Men's and women's work-life balance

<Basic Approach>

Given the declining birthrate and aging society, the changing employment situation and increasing globalization, it is essential for us to rethink the way we have worked to date, which assumes long working hours, and achieve a work-life balance in order to make progress in solving the M-curve issue and expanding women's participation in policy-making and planning processes. And it will also lead to the sustainable development of our Japan's economy and society, and to the revitalization of business. Balancing work and life is vital because it means people maintain their health, and can find a deep sense of fulfillment through activities like hobbies and learning, volunteering, and participating in the local community. This balance also means families can live and fulfill their responsibilities with confidence, including child rearing and caring responsibilities.

For these reasons, business, workers, and the national and local governments will cooperate to make steady progress on initiatives aim to realize a work-life balance, while striving to coordinate closely with policies supporting children and child rearing.

<Performance Objectives>

- Proportion providing opportunities for discussions by labour and management on issues such as working hours: 52.1%(2009) → 100%(2020)
- Proportion providing child care services for children younger than 3 years old: 22.8% (fiscal 2010) → 44%(2017)
- Proportion providing after-school children's clubs for elementary school students in first through third grades: 21.2%(fiscal 2010) → 40%(2017)
- Offering of after-school classes for children: 9,280 places (2010) → Encouragement so that all elementary school districts nationwide will implement things such as the "After-School Plan for Children" (fiscal 2012)
- Regional child raising support center: 7,100 places (estimated for fiscal 2009) (including independent programs in cities, towns, and villages) → 10,000 places (2014)
- Family support center programs: 599 places (fiscal 2009) → 950 cities, towns, and villages (2014)
- Proportion of workplaces where measures related to mental health care can be taken: 33.6%(2007) → 100%(2020)
- Employment rate for people between the ages of 20 and 34: 73.6%(2009) → 77%(2020)

<Basic Policy Directions>

1 Realizing work-life balance

We will pursue a number of measures under the Charter for Work-Life Balance and the Action Policy for Promoting Work-Life Balance. These include generating a social trend towards balancing work and life, controls on long working hours, popularizing a variety of working styles in tandem with fair treatment, promoting men's participation in housework and child rearing, and adjustments to working environments. We will also strive to popularize achieving work-life balance through a variety of working styles among the self-employed and those involved in agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

2 Support for child rearing and family care tailored to a variety of lifestyles

We will expand the government's family care support policies, working from the basic position of 'society as a whole supporting child rearing' and with the aim of realizing a society where people can raise children with confidence, irrespective of their gender or employment status. Some ways we will do this are by eliminating the waiting lists for childcare places, expanding the diversity of childcare services available, and enhancing child rearing support centers and networks based on Vision for Children and Childcare adopted by the Cabinet.

3 Promoting measures for managing the health of working men and women

Preparing work environments that protect workers' health is an important issue, not only because it assists both men and women to bring their full abilities to bear, but from the perspective of securing their lifelong health. Ensuring there is a high regard for motherhood in the workplace and providing environments where women can bear children with confidence while working is particularly important for reasons including that it assists women to exercise their abilities in full, and secures their lifelong health as well. Above all, given that women are increasingly staying at work during pregnancy and after giving birth, we will provide environments that ensure these women workers can continue to have opportunities to give full expression to their abilities.

Priority field 6 Promotion of gender equality aimed at bringing about vibrant agricultural, forestry, and fisheries communities

<Basic Approach >

We need to move forward with regional business development and the plan for the creation of new industries known as the collaboration of primary, secondary and tertiary industries for agriculture, forestry and fisheries, if we want to revitalize these rural communities in Japan. And when we do, it will not be possible without the participation of women. Women make up over half of agricultural workers and have a strong interest in the needs of consumers and food safety; they have broadened their activities into entrepreneurial involvement in the processing and sales of agricultural products and contribute to preserving and developing regional agricultural, forestry and fisheries communities.

This means that we will work to dispel the belief in the stereotyped perception for gender roles that is particularly entrenched in rural communities and encouraging women to participate in policy-making and planning processes. We will facilitate women's participation as equal partners in managerial and other aspects of agribusiness by promoting further increases in the number of 'family management agreements' that are entered into to, as well as their effective utilization. Family management agreements integrate promoting the equal participation of men and women and improvements in agribusiness management. And we will work at improving women's economic status, including through wealth creation, by supporting entrepreneurial and similar initiatives.

We will drive appropriate policy responses to the changes that threaten rural communities, such as depopulation and the progressive decline in the birthrate and the aging of society. These responses will be in parallel with our efforts to promote women's participation, and at the same time, we will work to promote work-life balance in rural communities, including through reducing the housework, child rearing and caring burdens that fall on women.

<Performance Objectives>

- *Number of agricultural committees and agricultural cooperatives that have no women employees: Agricultural committees: 890 (fi scal 2008) → 0 (fi scal 2013); Agricultural cooperatives: 535 (fi scal 2007) → 0 (fi scal 2013)*
- *Number of family management agreements concluded: 40,000 (fi scal 2007) → 70,000 (fi scal 2020)*

<Basic Policy Directions>

1 Raise awareness and expansion of women's participation in policy decision-making processes

We will promote reforms across the entire range of beliefs and actions, including behavior patterns that are dictated by deeply entrenched beliefs on the stereotyped perception for gender roles, outdated conventions and similar. And we will investigate actual conditions and carry out surveys and research, and ask local governments and groups involved in agriculture, forestry and fisheries to set specific targets in an effort to expand women's participation in policy decision-making processes.

2 Improving women's economic status, and working conditions and environment

We will clarify the status given women in agricultural, forestry and fisheries businesses, and in rural communities, in an effort to improve women's economic status in these contexts. And we will promote the establishment of support for women entering the workforce and welcoming work environments to make it easier for women to work in agribusiness.

3 Creating environments where women can live and participate with ease

We will promote a wide range of initiatives designed to ensure that women do not shoulder excessive burdens for both production and earning a living. In order to respond to the declining birthrate and aging society in rural communities, we will strive to make effective use of the pension system, as well as to promote financial aid to develop various services and set up necessary facilities that also cater for older women.

Priority field 7 Support of men and women facing living difficulties such as poverty

<Basic Approach >

Shifts like the increases in households left behind due to unaccompanied posting and single parent households, structural changes in employment and job entry, and the globalization of the economy and society have mean we are seeing hardships like poverty spreading to a broad sector. On the one hand, comparative poverty rates show that the percentage of women affected is higher than that of men in almost all age groups. And, a notable characteristic of these statistics is that poverty rates are high among households consisting of older women living alone, or where mothers and children live alone and single parent households.

Commentators have observed that these changes, including increases in non-regular workers and families left behind due to unaccompanied postings, mean that we need to respond by rebuilding safety nets.

And there is a need to push ahead with gender equality on this basis too – to respond to and prevent hardships like poverty. We will tackle the issues that will enable women to keep working and to secure a living wage. These are employment issues, in particular eliminating gender-based wage disparity and the M-curve, securing equal opportunity and fair treatment, promoting work-life balance and problems associated with non-regular employment.

We will also be planning to move forward with support for single parent households that are vulnerable to hardship, like families made up of mothers and children and policies to support people facing hardship.

And we will strive to provide support women to continue working or re-enter the workforce, relief from burden of education expenses and ongoing services adapted to a variety of individual lifestyles, partly in order to prevent hardship being passed from generation to generation.

<Performance Objectives >

- *Employment rate for people who undergo public vocational training: On-site: 73.9%; Dispatched: 62.4% (2009) → Onsite:80%; Dispatched: 65% (2020)*
- *Number of people who have obtained job cards: 291,000 (April 2008 - July 2010) → 3,000,000 (2020)*
- *Programs providing benefits for independent support, education, and training: 90.0% (fiscal 2009) → Implementation*

by all prefectural and city governments, and town and villages that have social welfare offices (fiscal 2014)

▪ Programs promoting advanced technical training: 81.8% (fiscal 2009) → Implementation by all prefectural and city governments, and town and villages that have social welfare offices (fiscal 2014)

▪ Number of young people not previously in employment, education or training who found employment or otherwise determined a course for their future through a regional young people's support station program: 100,000 (2020)

▪ Number of casual employees: 1,780,000 (2009) → 1,240,000 (2020)

<Basic Policy Directions>

1 Strengthening the role of safety nets

We will strive to reexamine and rethink systems and enhance the role of safety nets in light of the actual circumstances facing the economy and society. What we are facing is changes to the family and local communities due to altered employment and job entry conditions, such as the increase in non-regular workers, the rise in families left behind due to unaccompanied postings and the weakening of ties between people.

2 Issues aimed at stabilizing hiring and entering employment

We will examine taxation and social security structures that are neutral in their effect on a wide range of lifestyle choices. At the same time, we will push ahead with ensuring men and women enjoy equal opportunity and fair treatment at work, supporting women to continue to work and re-enter the workforce, and achieving work-life balance.

3 Issues around creating an environment where parents and children can live with confidence

We will provide support carefully tailored to the actual circumstances single parent families facing poverty and other hardships find themselves in, even to the extent of arrangements to ensure adequate time for child rearing. We will develop a comprehensive support plan designed for the actual challenges faced by families made up of mothers and children on their own and other single parent families. The plan will include policies to assist in child rearing and a life and assist for employment and income support, help with the costs of raising children, and financial assistance. In particular, we will step up publicity and educational activities aimed at dispelling the belief in the stereotyped perception for gender roles that is thought to be behind the ease with which families made up of fathers and children on their own become isolated in regional communities. And we will reduce the burden of costs like education expenses so that poverty and other hardships are not passed on to the next generation.

4 Efforts to increase the self-sufficiency of men and women

We will promote efforts to help people such as those who are victims of spousal abuse or young people who are 'shut-ins' or facing other hardships. This will make it possible people facing poverty and other hardships to draw on their inner strength and work towards a level of independence that matches their aptitudes and abilities.

Priority field 8 Creation of an environment in which people such as the elderly, the disabled, and non-Japanese people can live safely

<Basic Approach>

Women have a longer average life expectancy than men, and take up a high percentage of the older population, so policies on aging have a significant impact on women. And in some cases women are dealing with multiple additional challenges due to, being a person with a disability, a non-Japanese living and working in Japan, or Ainu people, or Dowry issue. And we need to take respect for human rights into consideration in relation to people facing difficulty because of their sexual orientation or a gender identity disorder.

This means that we will work from the perspective of gender equality to promote an environment in Japan in which

people facing a variety of hardships can live without anxiety.

<Performance Objectives>

- *Awareness of barrier-free facilities: 93.8% (fi scal 2005) → 100% (fi scal 2012)*
- *Awareness of universal design: 64.3% (fi scal 2005) → 80% (fi scal 2012)*
- *Employment rate for people between the ages of 60 and 64: 57.0% (2009) → 63.0% (2020)*
- *Number of cities, towns, and villages that have regional councils for supporting the persons with disabilities: approx. 1,426 (April 2009) → all cities, towns, and villages (2012)*
- *Actual employment rate for people with disabilities (private corporations): 1.68% (June 2010) → 1.8% (2020)*

<Basic Policy Directions>

1 Creating an environment where older people can live with confidence

We need to take older people seriously as an important group that takes pride in providing self-sustaining support for Japanese society alongside other generations and to purge rigid views and prejudices based on age or gender if our aging society is to be vital and affluent. And we need to develop carefully tailored measures to support independence that understand the differences between men and women in terms of living circumstances, beliefs and physical functions if we are to realize a society where older people can live in good health and with confidence. What is more, we need to take a cross-generational perspective on issues like long-established ways of working and relating to family that have continued since youth.

We will be progressing measures such as the following from a gender-equality angle so we achieve these objectives: support for older people to continue working and participate in society, systematic and environmental adjustments to facilitate financial independence in old age, initiatives aimed at helping older people to live independently in families and local communities in good health and with confidence, measures to prevent older people needing medical or family care that take gender differences into account, and building high-quality foundations for medical and family care.

2 Creating an environment where people with disabilities can live with confidence

We will be working to build a society where people with disabilities and those without can live and take part together, considering the separate needs of men with disabilities and women with disabilities. When we make these efforts, we need to be aware that women with disabilities can face multiple additional hardships in addition to their disability.

3 Creating an environment where non-Japanese can live with confidence

As globalization progresses more and more non-Japanese are living in Japan. And international marriages have risen dramatically since the latter half of the 1980s, with 80% involving couples where the husband is Japanese and the wife is non-Japanese. And the number of children who have a non-Japanese parent is also growing along with international marriages.

Non-Japanese women deal with the multiple additional challenges of differences in language, culture and values, and isolation in regional communities, in addition to the challenge of being a woman, and we will provide support tailored to their situation.

4 Responding to women who face multiple additional challenges

If we are to build an environment in which people can live with confidence we need to be conscious of the fact women sometimes face multiple additional challenges due to being a person with a disability, a non-Japanese living and working in Japan, a person with Ainu people, Dowa problem. And consideration from the perspective of respecting human rights is needed in relation to people, whether men or women, who face hardships due to issues like their sexual orientation or a

gender identity disorder. This means we will promote measures like human rights education and promotion.

Priority field 9 Elimination of all forms of violence against women

<Basic Approach>

Violence against women is a gross infringement of human rights, and constitutes a criminal offence. Assisting women to recover is not only a responsibility of the state but a crucial issue to be overcome in creating a gender-equal society.

It is important to realize that the forms of violence against women are diversifying due to the spread of the Internet and cellular phones. What is sought is a rapid and effective response to these issues, from a new standpoint. And we must give ample consideration, when we help victims such as children, older persons, people with disabilities and non-Japanese, to the challenges that arise because each has a different background and is affected in a different way, and provide assistance that is carefully tailored to the nature of the violence and the affiliations of the victim.

It is for these reasons that in order to eliminate violence against women, we need to both build a base of popular support for elimination through means like a widespread public awareness campaigns, but promote comprehensive, broad-scale efforts targeting the forms of violence, including spousal violence and sexual offences.

<Performance Objectives>

- *Proportion of people who are aware that slapping or threatening by pretending to punch between a husband and wife is violence: 58.4% (slapping), 52.5% (threatening by pretending to punch) (2009) → 100% (2015)*
- *Awareness of the Act on the prevention of spousal violence and the protection of victims: 76.1% (2009) → 100% (2015)*
- *Awareness of points of contact for consultation about spousal violence: 29% (2009) → 67% (2015)*
- *Number of spousal violence counseling and support centers in municipalities: 21 (2010) → 100 (2015)*
- *Number of gender-equality centers that offer counseling with explicit announcement that they accept consultations about sexual crimes: 22 prefectures (2010) → at least one in each prefecture (2015)*

<Basic Policy Directions>

1 Creating a foundation for preventing and eliminating violence against women

Violence against women is a gross infringement of human rights, and constitutes a criminal offence. It is a crucial impediment to the creation of a gender-equal society where men and women as equals value mutual respect and build equal relationships. This is why we will strongly promote education campaigns that bring about the social climate of zero tolerance for violence.

We will also prevent violence being ‘swept under the carpet’ by providing user-friendly counseling service for victims and work at the same time towards effective victim support, including assisting with victims’ psychological and physical recovery processes, through measures such as promoting cooperation between public and private bodies.

2 Promoting the prevention of domestic violence and protecting victims

When providing support and other measures for victims of spousal violence, prefectures, which bear the main responsibility, and municipalities, which are the government body closest to the problems, will undertake a range of initiatives effectively, first ensuring an appropriate division of roles and mutual cooperation between them.

In terms of victim support, we will work at improving counseling services while also providing ongoing support tailored

to the situation the victim is in and the actual circumstances in the locality. This support will be provided across each stage, from protecting the victim to supporting the victim to become independent, and with the participation and cooperation of a broad range of relevant organizations including private groups, with the relevant prefectural and municipal organizations playing a core role.

We will also strive to enhance and bolster both the systematic and operational aspects of the Act on the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims (Act No. 31 of 2001). This will incorporate a review in line with actual conditions.

3 Promoting measures against sexual offences

We will establish counseling services so that victims of sexual offences can report attacks without hesitation and receive the advice they need. In addition, we will establish systems for supporting victims' psychological and physical recovery processes, both immediately after the attack and over the medium to long term, irrespective of whether the attack has been reported. And we will make doubly sure that we protect the victim's privacy and prevent secondary harm.

We will strengthen measures to prevent sexual offences by people who are in a close relationship with the victim, like close relatives and people who are in a position of influence over the victim. At the same time, we will review the relevant legislation and consider measures like those that are effective in preventing repeat offences.

4 Promoting measures to eliminate sexual violence against children

Given that sexual offences perpetrated by those close to children are easily hidden and intensified, we will prioritize the development of strategies to effectively prevent the harm caused by sexual violence against children. At the same time, we will work towards establishing environments in which children who have suffered harm can receive the necessary counseling and support, in order to prevent indelible lifelong effects.

We will counter technological changes like the spread of the Internet and cellular phones by devising measures that are effective in eliminating child pornography and prostitution.

5 Promoting measures against sexual exploitation

We will strictly apply and enforce relevant legislation aimed at eradicating prostitution, which commodifies sex and compromises human dignity. At the same time, we will promote initiatives to protect women from the harms of prostitution and help them to recover psychologically and physically and return to society, as well as youth education campaigns.

6 Promoting measures against trafficking in persons

Trafficking in persons causes serious psychological and physical pain for the victims. From the perspective of gender equality, we will promote effective initiatives, in accordance with Japan's 2009 Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons, concerning the prevention and elimination of trafficking in persons and the policies to support victims.

7 Promoting measures to prevent sexual harassment

We will conduct a thorough campaign to give guidance to business under the Equal Employment Opportunity Law in relation to sexual harassment in the workplace. At the same time, we will gain a proper grasp of the actual situation and take effective steps to prevent harm, even in fields such as education, research, medicine, social welfare facilities and sports.

We will deal strictly with those who engage in sexual harassment, enhancing psychological care for victims while also taking steps to prevent recurrence.

8 Measures against depictions of sex and violence in the media

Media depictions that portray women as no more than sexual objects or objects of violence are a significant barrier to the creation of a gender-equal society and may violate women's human rights.

Not only has the spread of the Internet and other technology meant that the sources of this kind of sexual or violent expression have spread across society in general, but the distribution of content about which grave fears have been expressed internationally in even computer games and the virtual world is currently a problem. Considering these situations, we will devise effective countermeasures, having given due attention to the freedom of expression.

Priority field 10 Support for women's lifelong health

<Basic Approach>

It is fair to say men and women each living with consideration for the other and ample mutual understanding of physical gender differences, accompanied by respect for human rights, is a prerequisite for creating a gender-equal society. Men and women need to obtain accurate knowledge and information about the mind and body, and how to keep both healthy to be able to make their own decisions and enjoy good health. In particular, men and women both need to pay heed to the fact that they face different health issues across their lifetimes, in the case of women, for example their reproductive health/rights are especially important given the possibility that they may fall pregnant and give birth.

Given these facts we will promote the development of comprehensive policies to support the health of all women across their lifetimes, irrespective of whether they have children or not and irrespective of age, together with comprehensive initiatives to support health that are tailored to gender differences.

<Performance Objectives>

• Proportion of Japanese people who are interested in dietary education: 71.7% (2009) → no less than 90% (fi scal 2015)

• Proportion of women satisfied with pregnancy and delivery: 92.6% (fi scal 2009) → 100% (2014)

• Ratio of notifications of pregnancy during or before the eleventh week of pregnancy: 78.1% (fi scal 2010) → 100% (2014)

• Proportion of pregnant women who know about the "Maternity Health Care Guidance Contact Card": 41.2% (fi scal 2009) → 100% (2014)

• Number of NICU beds per 10,000 births: 21.2 (fi scal 2008) → 25 - 30 (fi scal 2014)

• Proportion of patients who can receive counseling from a specialist when they undergo treatment for infertility: Full-time infertility counselor: 15.3%; Infertility counselor who also holds other positions: 47.4%; Full-time infertility coordinator: 11.8%; Infertility coordinator who also holds other positions: 47.5% (fi scal 2009) → 100% (2014)

• Counseling centers specializing in infertility: 61 prefectures and cities (fi scal 2010) → all prefectures, designated cities, and core cities (fi scal 2014)

• Smoking and drinking alcohol during pregnancy: Smoking percentages: 5.5%, 4.4%, 4.9% (results from time of 3-4month, 18-month, and 3-year-old medical examinations) (fi scal 2009) → 0% (2014)

Alcohol percentages: 7.6%, 7.5%, 8.1% (same as above) (fi scal 2009) → 0% (2014)

• Percentages of women who get medical examinations for uterus cancer and breast cancer:

Uterus cancer: 21.3% (2007) → no less than 50% (end of fi scal 2011)

Breast cancer: 20.3% (2007) → no less than 50% (end of fi scal 2011)

• Percentage of adults who play sports at least once a week: 45.3% (2009) → approx. 65% (as soon as possible)

<Basic Policy Directions>

1 Maintaining and improving lifelong health for men and women

We will establish firm foundations for health education and counseling services that allow men and women to manage their own health in a way that is appropriate for their own state of health. In particular, we will promote comprehensive measures that enable women to maintain and improve their own health as fits each of the stages of life, including adolescence, the reproductive years, menopause and old age.

2 Supporting health in pregnancy and childbirth

The reproductive years are a critical juncture in support for women's health and we will expand support systems so that women in the regions can bear and raise children safely and with confidence. At the same time we will promote the building of environments where it is easy for women to receive support, including by the firm establishment of a work-life balance. We will place particular emphasis on securing medical systems for the perinatal period and measures to assist women suffering from infertility. There is also a need, for reasons including preventing unwanted pregnancies, for people to correctly understand and take appropriate action in relation to sexual health problems, given the flood of commercialized, inaccurate information about sex. This means we will implement developmentally appropriate sex education in schools in cooperation with families and local communities. And we will also work to provide accurate information to the broader population on the importance of maintaining sexual and reproductive health.

3 Promoting responses to health threats

(1) Promoting comprehensive measures against the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) from prevention to treatment, starting with HIV/AIDS and the human papillomavirus (HPV) that causes cervical cancer

STIs like HIV/AIDS and HPV (human papillomavirus), which causes cervical cancer, have a major effect on health and we will promote a comprehensive response, from prevention through to treatment.

(2) Promoting measures against drug abuse, smoking and drinking

We will work at strengthening measures against drug abuse, which not only ruins the physical and psychological health of the individual concerned, but threatens the very fabric of society by destroying families, causing crime and other ill effects. Further, given that those who smoke or drink to excessive suffer from fragile health and women in particular suffer harm to reproductive and fetal health, we will spare no pains in terms of measures to prevent passive smoking, and promote measures like providing information on the health risks.

4 Promoting health support tailored to gender differences

Given differences like differing levels of susceptibility to diseases, men and women need to receive health support that is tailored to gender differences in order to maintain their lifelong health. This means that we will promote surveys and research into gender-appropriate medical treatments. At the same time we will push ahead with educational campaigns to spread awareness of the importance of gender-specific medical treatment, improvements to the medical system, support for gender-specific programs for maintaining physical and psychological health, and measures to prevent lifestyle diseases.

5 Expanding women's participation in the medical field

We will work to expand the medical system and women's participation in the medical field in order to respond to the need for support lifelong health for women. To illustrate, more than 30% of the successful candidates in the National Medical Examination are women, and we need to create conditions that make it easy for women doctors to remain in the

workforce and exercise their abilities, for reasons that include improve the quality of our doctors and maintain and improving the health on our population. So we will promote measures like those that ensure a work-life balance, and support workforce entry and re-entry for women doctors, nurses, midwives, pharmacists and medical technicians.

6 Promoting lifelong involvement in sports

We will establish environments that promote women's participation in sport with the aim of men and women themselves taking up sports and creating healthy and active lifestyles for both mind and body.

Priority field 11 Enhancement of education and learning to promote gender equality and facilitate diversity of choice

<Basic Approach>

If we want to achieve a gender-equal society, we need both men and women to independently express their individuality and abilities, and participate in building that society. All of this begins with education and learning.

We plan to cooperate interactively with schools, the family, local communities, workplaces and all other arenas in society to expand education and learning that advances gender equality. Our aim is to dispel belief in the stereotyped perception for gender roles, build a sense of gender equality based on respect for human rights, and promote a deeper understanding of gender equality.

And we will provide support carefully tailored to people's lifestyles at the various stages of life to enable men and women to act of their own accord in making wide range of choices, and to promote women's empowerment as a way of drawing out women's abilities and vitality.

<Performance Objectives>

- *Gender disparities in all levels of education of the Millennium Development Goals: elimination by 2015*
- *Proportion of prefectural and municipal boards of education that have at least one female member: 93.2% (2009) → 100% (2015)*
- *Proportion of female vice principals or higher in elementary and secondary educational organizations: 14.7% (2010) → 30% (2020)*
- *Proportion of female university presidents, vice presidents, professors, associate professors and lecturers: 16.7% (2009) → 30% (2020)*

<Basic Policy Directions>

1 Education and learning to promote gender equality

We will conduct awareness and education campaigns and other initiatives designed to help those involved in education, both at school and community levels to understand the principles of gender equality.

Our plan is to foster consideration for others and self-reliance in both men and women, and to step up education and learning that promotes respect for the individual and the principles of gender equality.

2 Enhancing education to facilitate diverse choices, skill development, and learning opportunities

We will promote lifelong learning and capacity building that incorporates career training and is based on the perspective of gender equality. Our aim is that each man and woman should acquire the ability and conviction to consider their own way of life, abilities and aptitudes, and to actively choose their own path, unswayed by beliefs in the stereotyped perception for gender roles. In particular, we will address the demand for more diverse and advanced kinds of learning. At the same time we will ramp up measures aimed at providing learning opportunities and promoting participation in society with the aim of building a society that facilitates lifelong learning, at every opportunity, in every location and can capitalize appropriately on the fruits of that learning, in order to contribute to women's empowerment.

What is more, we will strive to realize the Millennium Development Goals target of eliminating the gender gap at all levels of educational achievement by 2015.

3 Expanding women's participation in policy-making and planning processes at the school level of education

We will foster awareness in school level educational institutions that making full use of women's abilities is essential in terms of revitalizing each organization involved in education at this level, and strive to expand the participation of women in policy-making and planning processes.

Priority field 12 Gender equality in science and technology and academic fields

<Basic Approach>

Science and technology, and academia are the foundation for the future development of Japan – and of human society – and we are seeing the intensification of the international competition to acquire knowledge. If we wish to maintain and improve Japan's international competitiveness and reinvigorate our research endeavors with a variety of points of view and ideas, then we must create an environment in which women researchers can give maximum expression to their abilities and promote their participation. And generating a diverse range of creative, groundbreaking knowledge by furthering science and technology, and academia will also contribute to promoting the creation of a gender-equal society.

However, women's participation in research fields in Japan is still inadequate compared to other developed countries. We will take proactive steps to promote increased participation by women in the fields of science and technology and academia with the aim of accelerating the appointment of, and active participation by, women researchers. These steps will include supporting the promotion of positive action tailored to the actual circumstances of research institutions through creating environments in which women can balance childbearing and raising children with their research, striving to support women university students and high school graduates in choosing paths into scientific fields, and promoting the dissemination and adoption of the pioneering results of a range of institutions.

<Performance Objectives>

• *Target employment numbers for female researchers (natural sciences): 23.1% (2008) → the numbers in the 4th Phase of the Science & Technology Basic Plan (for fiscal 2011 through 2015), which takes into consideration the following objectives: "25% for natural sciences (at an early date), and then aim for 30%. In particular, early achievement of 20% for science, 15% for engineering, and 30% for agriculture, and aiming to achieve 30% for medicine, dentistry, and pharmacology combined." (Council for Science and Technology Policy Report on Expert Investigation of Basic Policies)*

• *Proportion of female council members of the Science Council of Japan: 20.5% (2008) → 22% (2015)*

• *Proportion of female members of the Science Council of Japan: 12.5% (2008) → 14% (2015)*

<Basic Policy Directions>

1 Expanding women's participation in science and technology, and academia

It is essential that we create environments in which women researchers can give maximum expression to their abilities. Our aim is to secure a wide variety of points of view and ideas in the fields of science and technology and academia, create new knowledge by reinvigorating research activities and strive to improve our international competitiveness. And we will work at expanding women's participation in policy-making and planning processes in the fields of science and technology, and academia.

2 Creating environments that support increased participation by women researchers

We will facilitate women giving greater expression to their abilities by fostering environments that are easy to work in, and accept diverse value systems and working styles.

In particular, we will encourage working environments that are friendly to women researchers, by methods like improving the working environment. These methods will include providing childcare support so that women researchers can balance responsibilities like childbearing, childrearing and family care with their research and continue in their research role, research support, support for returning to work and rethinking the culture of the workplace.

3 Promoting entry to scientific fields by women university students and high school graduates

Comparatively few women university students and high school graduates enter scientific fields in Japan. Our response will be to support women university students and high school graduates to choose pathways into the sciences through initiatives that will contribute to rousing and raising the interest and attention of these women in order to cultivate human resources for scientific fields.

Priority field 13 Promotion of gender equality in the media

<Basic Approach>

We will be asking media concerns to join us in making proactive efforts through the media to broaden understanding of gender equality and dispel beliefs in the stereotyped perception for gender roles. The depictions of sex and violence in media that treat women and children solely as sexual objects, or objects of violence is a major barrier to the creation of a gender-equal society. And it can also violate women's and children's human rights. We will carry out educational campaigns based on these perspectives and ask media outlets to implement measures including self-regulation.

We also need to take appropriate steps to segregate information that is made available in highly public spaces or by the media that involve sexual expression or the expression of violence in order to protect the human rights of youth and those who prefer not to come into contact with this material. To be specific, we will consider measures based on the situation where the illegal or harmful information that violates the human rights of women and children is now sent by wide variety of sources and is, moreover, now easy to receive.

In addition, we will persevere with efforts to respond to these kinds of issues that now surround the media by improving media literacy, so that individuals are able to act on their own initiative to gather a variety of information, assess it and transmit it appropriately.

And we will ask media circles to expand the participation of women in the industry.

<Performance Objectives>

<Basic Policy Directions>

1 Supporting media efforts to promote expression that shows respect for women's human rights

We will promote the correct understanding of gender equality by proactive publicity through the media. And we will enhance measures that are effective against illegal or harmful information that violates the human rights of women and children. At the same time we will place particular emphasis on broad-scale education campaigns, including those targeting youth, on how to handle information on the Internet.

2 Promoting expression in publicity and publications prepared by national administrative agencies that promotes gender equality

We will help decision-makers in administrative agencies to understand the core aspects of gender equality, so that their publicity appropriately reflects the perspective of gender equality.

3 Expanding women's participation in the media arena

We will strive to expand women's participation in policy-making and planning processes within media-related circles.

Priority field 14 Promoting gender equality in the area of regional development, disaster prevention, environment, and others

<Basic Approach >

The local community is the arena that is, along with the family, closest to people's lives. And it is important to promote gender equality in that arena in order to realize a gender-equal society. Local communities are facing a variety of changes, like progressive aging and depopulation, the weakening of personal ties and the increase in families left behind due to unaccompanied postings. The situation is now that if men and women don't both put their shoulders to the wheel, local communities will fail. Given the circumstances, gender equality is essential at the local community level in order to join together, one by one, to create a new community, increase local dynamism and build a sustainable society.

To achieve this goal we need to ensure the perspective of gender equality is reflected, through means like expanding women's participation in local policy-making and planning processes or having men and women participate together in areas usually reserved for a set gender or age bracket (women participating in activities like local redevelopment, community building, tourism or disaster prevention events at fire stations, men participating in activities like childcare support).

Accordingly, we will put more effort into promoting awareness and education campaigns on gender equality, while also shifting towards practical activities that help solve problems. We will promote gender equality at a grassroots level for all people, and strive to build local communities and field-specific horizontal networks based on gender equality, revitalize the local community's strengths in gender equality and actively promote gender-equal administration by local government bodies.

In addition, although the disaster prevention, environmental and other fields vary, from activities rooted in local communities to those on a national and global scale, we will promote gender equality in the way organizations are run and how their activities are carried out.

<Performance Objectives>

- *Proportion of female heads of community associations: 4.1% (2010) → 10% (2015)*

• *Number of prefectural or city disaster councils that do not have any female members: 13 (2009) → 0 (2015)*

• *Number of female firefighters nationwide: 19,103 (2010) → 100,000*

<Basic Policy Directions>

1 Building a foundation for promoting gender equality in local communities

We will work to strengthen and enhance the roles of institutions like gender equality centers and women's centers, which are an important focal point for gender equality in local communities. At the same time, we will use places where local activities are held, like public halls and neighborhood associations to promote the building of a foundation through which the concept of gender equality can become a basic prerequisite for all local activities, through measures like encouraging the building of local networks and the active promotion of gender equality in local governments. When we do so we will promote the enthusiastic efforts of all people, irrespective of gender or employment status, given that the common perception has been that gender equality is only a problem for working women.

2 Promoting gender equality in local community activities

We will invest more energy into awareness and education campaigns in local communities to dispel beliefs in the stereotyped perception for gender roles, and at the same time, promote a shift towards practical activities that help solve problems. And we will work towards achieving a work-life balance so that a diverse range of people like men and young people can participate in a variety of local community activities.

In addition, we will strive to expand women's participation in local policy-making and planning processes, at the same time striving to build local networks based on the perspective of gender equality and to renew local communities, being careful to ensure that this does not impede women's own autonomous efforts.

3 Promoting local economic revitalization through local redevelopment, community building, tourism and cultural activities based on the perspective of gender equality

We will review local culture and industry, local redevelopment, and community building, based on a fresh approach of gender equality, and further, will realize the revitalization of the local community and economy and lifestyle improvements through deepening exchanges with people from within Japan and abroad through tourism focusing on gender equality.

4 Promotion of gender equality in disaster prevention

There are obvious issues at times of disasters surrounding the fact that a heavier load of household responsibilities is focused on women and when we engage in disaster prevention (reconstruction) efforts, we need to grasp and promote the different needs of men and women. We will establish disaster prevention (reconstruction) plans that adopt the perspective of gender equality so we can resolve the problems that surround women during disasters and the reconstruction stage.

5 Promoting environmental initiatives based on the perspective of gender equality

In an effort to resolve global environmental issues and achieve a sustainable society, we will work at reducing the burden each individual's lifestyle imposes on the environment, capitalizing on the high degree of interest, experience and other involvements women have with environmental conservation. And we will promote the active participation of women in the environmental arena, which is a major issue in terms of achieving a sustainable society.

Priority field 15 Respect for international regulations and contributions to the 'Equality, Development, and Peace' of the global community

<Basic Approach>

The promotion of Japan's gender equality policy has been part of an international movement to improve the status of women that began with the United Nations. Although gender equality policies have made great strides in some overseas countries, as was pointed out in the last CEDAW concluding observations, numerous issues remain in Japan. We will take appropriate steps to respond to the advice given in the opinion, including those matters for urgent implementation and follow up within two years.

We will also actively pursue appointing women to roles in the international arena.

In addition, we will engage in the fair and effective promotion of gender mainstreaming when implementing ODA, based on the fact that gender equality is an issue for promotion in the context of international cooperation. And given that any violation of women's human rights whatsoever is unacceptable, whether in wartime or peacetime, we will promote women's participation in peacebuilding processes.

Our aim is to obtain international recognition of gender equality in Japan through these kinds of measures.

<Performance Objectives>

• *Millennium Development Goals, which set 2015 as a limit: Work in collaboration with each nation, international organization, and NGO in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals*

<Basic Policy Directions>

1 International cooperation: proactive compliance with international standards, enhanced domestic implementation and disseminating information on gender equality in Japan

The promotion of Japan's gender equality policy has been part of an international movement to improve the status of women that began with the United Nations. We will continue to disseminate information about international norms and standards, like the various types of treaties that have a deep connection with gender equality, starting with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and including the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Political Declaration and Outcome Document adopted at the UN General Assembly's "Women 2000" Session, as well as discussions in international conferences like the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. At the same time we will actively endeavor to strengthen the domestic implementation of these international norms and standards.

2 International contributions based on the perspective of gender equality

During the process from planning an ODA proposal to implementation and review, we will work from the perspective of ensuring human security and gender equality in order to effectively implement ODA programs and projects. And promoting gender mainstreaming in developing countries will make a positive contribution to promoting gender equality and achieving women's empowerment, as well as improving the status of women. Further, we will promote women's active participation in policy-making and planning processes from a peacebuilding perspective, including preventing, managing and resolving disputes, rather than from a perspective that portrays women as victims.

3 Enhancing the role of external publicity

We will use a range of opportunities to effectively publicize Japan's gender equality initiatives in the international community in order to raise Japan's profile and reputation in the global context.

Part III Implementation of the Plan

We will engage in a comprehensive roll-out of measures stated above under each of the Priority fields in Part II in order to create a gender-equal society. At the same time, all government policy must reflect the perspective of gender equality. And it is important that it is not only national measures that are rolled out, but we promote gender-equality initiatives as an entire populace, with the cooperation of local governments, private bodies and other groups. In addition, it is essential that we observe the implementation of the Third Basic Plan and the latest CEDAW concluding observations and that these observations are reflected in subsequent efforts.

For these reasons we will be striving to strengthen our national machinery, while also enhancing systems that will propel us towards the realization of a gender-equal society, systematically coordinating with local governments, private bodies and other groups.

1 Strengthening the role of Japan's National Machinery for the Promotion of Gender Equality

The Minister of State for Gender Equality, the Council for Gender Equality, the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality and Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality comprehensively promote the creation of a gender-equal society, while also acting as a hub located in the Cabinet and Cabinet Office that promotes Japan's gender equality into Japan's core institutions and reflects the perspective of gender equality into all government policy. We will continue, under the Prime Minister, the Chief Cabinet Secretary and the Minister of State for Gender Equality, to give our utmost to the roles we fulfill, including comprehensive planning and drafting, overall lateral coordination, supervisory and impact surveying functions, and will at the same time, further strengthen those roles and systems.

2 Strengthening the supervisory role in relation to the practical implementation of the Third Basic Plan and the latest CEDAW concluding observations:

- (1) Strengthening the supervisory role in relation to the implementation of the Third Basic Plan;**
- (2) Strengthening the supervisory role in relation to the latest CEDAW concluding observations;**
- (3) Expansion of measures for handling complaints and other matters.**

3 Enhancement of surveys of the effect government policy is having on the creation of a gender-equal society

4 Support for initiatives by local governments, private groups and other bodies (such as local governments, National Women's Education Center, gender equality centers, women's centers, NPOs, NGOs, local community groups, universities, business, economic groups and labor unions)