

4. The Intensive Policy to Accelerate the Empowerment of Women 2018 (Decided by the Headquarters for Creating a Society in which All Women Shine in June 2018)

To further accelerate women's empowerment, in June 2015 the Intensive Policy to Accelerate the Empowerment of Women was formulated for the first time for the purpose of incorporating the perspective of women's empowerment into the annual requests for budgetary appropriations of government ministries and agencies. Since then, Intensive Policy has been decided every June.

Overview of the Intensive Policy to Accelerate the Empowerment of Women 2018

Fundamental Approach

- ✓ A male-dominated society is still firmly entrenched in Japan
- ✓ Society does not recognize the need to resolve difficulties faced by women
- ✓ Unresolved issues include women's health and violence against women

Resolve remaining issues as a prerequisite to empowerment of women

- ✓ Japan faces a declining birth rate and shrinking population
- ✓ Expanding active participation by women creates diversity and becomes a driving force to generate added value that contributes to improved productivity and economic growth

Create a fulfilling employment environment for women

Build a fair society where the various difficulties faced by women are resolved

Enabling Safe and Secure Lives

● Reinforce lifelong health support for women

Improve access to **cervical and breast cancer screening**, encourage measures to support women suffering from **post-natal depression and menopause**, advance understanding of **women's health maintenance** including use of low-dose oral contraceptive pills, and promote health through **sports**.

● Support for women in difficulty

Take appropriate measures to enable **pregnant students to continue their studies**, support **single-parent households**, examine ways **to assure child support payments**, and improve conditions **for non-regular workers**.

● Eliminate all forms of violence against women

Promote measures to address sexual offenses and sexual violence through more stable operation of **one-stop support centers**, etc., initiatives aimed at **eliminating sexual harassment**, and enhanced **support for victims of domestic violence**.

Women's Full Participation in Economic Life across All Sectors

● Promote work style reforms to help women thrive and efforts to enhance productivity and enrich working lives

Promote diverse, flexible **work styles**, **work-life balance**, and **telecommuting**, expand "retraining" to encourage women to resume their jobs or re-enter the workforce, and **revitalize the regions through active participation of women**.

● Encourage men to adopt more supportive lifestyles and help men to develop a fuller awareness of the issues

Encourage men to take **paternity leave** and **childcare leave**, ensure appropriate **personnel evaluation by public sector managers**, and **raise public awareness** through initiatives such as the Otouhan (get Dads cooking) Campaign.

● Conduct training for women and expand their presence in all types of fields

Examine reforms to systems, including **revisions required three years after the Act on Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement in the Workplace came into force**, encourage **visibility of data on active participation by women**, expand the **appointment of female directors**, expand active participation by women in sectors such as the media, **bolster support for female entrepreneurs**, and promote initiatives based on the **Act on Promotion of Gender Equality in the Political Field (Act No. 28 of 2018)**.

Improvement of Basis for Women's Empowerment

● Enhance infrastructure for childcare and family care, and promote initiatives to ease educational burdens

Create **infrastructure for childcare and family care** aimed at eliminating waiting lists for childcare centers and ensuring no-one leaves their job due to family care responsibilities, promote initiatives aimed at **easing educational burdens**, and promote efforts to ensure widespread availability of **liquid milk formula for infants**.

● Enhance education and training to enable diverse choices regardless of gender

Enhance **careers education** from school level to provide more opportunities for thinking about lives and careers.

● Improve systems and structures that embody the vision of active participation by women

Examine systems and structures that do not stifle the desire to work, and revise **disaster response and recovery initiatives and guidelines to embody a gender equality perspective**.

Results of Policies to Accelerate the Empowerment of Women

Enabling Safe and Secure Lives

- Amendment to the Penal Code including changes related to elements and statutory penalty of rape offence (effective July 2017)
- Establishment of support grants for victims of sexual offenses and sexual violence (FY2017)
One-stop support centers for victims of sexual offenses and sexual violence established in 43 prefectures (as of April 2018)
- Introduction of a helpline for a victim of sexual offences accessible on a single phone number (#(pound key)8103) nationwide (from August 2017)
- Promotion of efforts to eliminate sexual violence against young women
- Launch of project to support independence of single-parent households and large families (from FY2015)

Improvement of Basis for Women's Empowerment

- Efforts to ensure more childcare options
Acceleration of the Plan for Raising Children in Peace of Mind to provide childcare for 320,000 children by the end of FY2020 (included in the New Economic Policy Package issued in December 2017)
- Measures to allow women to use their pre-marriage surnames alongside their married surnames on their Individual Number cards and passports
- Acceleration of efforts to set regulatory standards based on the Food Sanitation Act for more widespread use of liquid milk formula
- Establishment of new Medal of Honor category for gender equality and women's empowerment (services to promotion of women's empowerment) (FY2017)

Women's Full Participation in Economic Life across All Sectors

< Systems and structures >

- Establishment of Act on Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement in the Workplace (fully effective April 2016)
- Start of efforts to add public procurement assessment criteria relating to work-life balance, based on public procurement guidelines (from FY2016)
All 26 government bodies began efforts in FY2016 (to date, 20 bodies have fully implemented such efforts)
- Establishment of grants for promoting active participation by women in regional communities (FY2017)
- Revision of the Equal Employment Opportunity Act for Men and Women and other relevant regulations to prevent maternity harassment (effective January 2017)
- Revision of the Child Care and Family Care Leave Act to incorporate provisions for extension of childcare leave if children cannot enter childcare centers, etc. (effective October 2017)
- Formulation of Guidelines for Initiatives to Promote Women's Activity and Work-life Balance of National Public Employees, and promotion of measures based on action plan devised from these guidelines
- Measures to promote participation by women based on the 5th Science and Technology Basic Plan
- Introduction of childbirth and childcare grant to support male workers (FY2016)
- Act on Promotion of Gender Equality in the Political Field passed and came into effect (May 2018)

< Projects >

- Promotion of greater visibility in the political and economic fields
- Convening for World Assembly of Women (held four times since 2014)
- Creation of support network for women working in science and engineering (membership of 173 organization as of May 2018)
Summer science and engineering challenge events for female students (125 organizations held 186 events in FY2017, attracting around 23,000 participants)
- Training for female leaders to become corporate director candidates (from FY2017)
- Enhanced support for women entrepreneurs
Creation of support network for women entrepreneurs (from FY2016)
Support for women's entrepreneurship workshops and corporate matching, etc.
- Encouragement for men to undertake housework and childcare through the Otouhan (get Dads cooking) Campaign, etc.
- Thank You Papa project
Husbands who took leave following the birth of a child: 55.9%
- Certification of agricultural enterprises making efforts to encourage participation by women
Enterprises certified in three years: 102
- "Nougyou-joshi (agricultural women)" Project (from 2013)
Widespread dissemination of in collaboration with private sector, etc. (participation by 37 enterprises and 5 schools, with membership of 716 farming women)