

4. The Intensive Policy to Accelerate the Empowerment of Women 2019 (Decided by the Headquarters for Creating a Society in which All Women Shine in June 2019)

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, the Intensive Policy has been decided every June.

Overview of the Intensive Policy to Accelerate the Empowerment of Women 2019

- Considering factors such as longer healthy lifespans and women's desire to work, it is vital for women to participate actively in society throughout their lives.
- Issues including difficulties faced by women and violence against women have not yet been resolved.
- Efforts tailored to local circumstances play an important role in empowering women.

- Aim for **social structures enabling diverse choices in an era of 100-year lifespans.**
- Engage in head-on efforts to **resolve difficulties and enable safe and secure lives to support the empowerment of women.**
- Promote women's active participation across all sectors as a **powerful lever for productivity improvement, economic growth, and regional revitalization.**

I Enabling Safe and Secure Lives

- Eliminate all forms of violence against women
Encourage efforts to support victims in NGO shelters, etc., strengthen coordination between responses to domestic violence and **child abuse**, build comprehensive victim-support structures including **offender rehabilitation programs**, stabilize operation and enhance quality of one-stop support centers, and promote measures to **eliminate sexual harassment**.
- Reinforce lifelong health support for women
Further improve access to services such as **cervical and breast cancer screening** and **promote health at every stage of women's lives**, for example by enhancing support for **menopause counselling** and improving the quality of **osteoporosis screening**.
- Support for women in difficulty
Support pioneering initiatives by NPOs and other groups active in working to meet the needs of **women facing various difficulties**, aid counselling for unplanned pregnancies and other difficulties faced by **young pregnant women**, and make efforts to ensure that child support payments are maintained.

III Improvement of Basis for Women's Empowerment

- Enhance gender-based statistics, which form a basis for women's empowerment
Promote greater understanding of the importance of regional **gender-based statistics** and encourage the compilation and utilization of such statistics.
- Enhance infrastructure for childcare and long-term care, and promote initiatives to ease educational burdens
Create infrastructure for childcare and long-term care aimed at eliminating waiting lists for childcare centers and ensuring no-one leaves their job due to long-term care responsibilities, and **launch free** early childhood education and care, and higher education.
- Develop education and training programs to enable diverse choices regardless of gender
Develop **life planning education programs** to instill gender equality awareness from school level.
- 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.

II Women's Full Participation in Economic Life across All Sectors

- Promote active participation of women in regional revitalization
Promote regional development initiatives with appeal for women, and support women in taking up new employment by encouraging the **establishment and utilization of collaborative public-private platforms** in prefectures.
- Promote work style reforms to help women thrive and efforts to enhance productivity and enrich working lives
Expand **support for SMEs** required to draw up action plans pursuant to **revision of the Act on the Promotion of Female Participation and Career Advancement in the Workplace** and enhance visibility of information on women's participation, enable women—especially **middle-aged and older women**—to **retrain and fulfill their re-learning and employment needs** through development and deployment of comprehensive career advancement support models, and promote diverse, flexible work styles, work-life balance, and telework.
- Encourage men to adopt more supportive lifestyles and help men to develop a fuller awareness of the issues
Encourage men working in the private and public sectors to take **paternity leave and childcare leave**, and raise public awareness to encourage men to take part in housework and childcare.
- Expand women's participation in politics
Research on actual situation and provide information, including overseas initiatives, and examine ways of **gathering and disseminating positive examples in local public bodies**.
- Conduct training for women and expand their presence in all types of fields
Work-style reform for doctors, expand active participation by women in the **science, technology, and academic sectors**, support female **entrepreneurs**, promote gender lens investing, expand the **appointment of female directors**, further participate in discussion at **international conferences**, enhance and publicize Japanese initiatives.

Results of Policies to Accelerate the Empowerment of Women

Enabling Safe and Secure Lives	Improvement of Basis for Women's Empowerment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Efforts to promote women's health ● Launch of project to support single-parent households and large families (from FY2015) ● The Amendment to Act for Implementation of the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction (enacted in May 2019) ● Partial revision of the Penal Code to amend provisions including the constituent elements of and statutory penalty for the crime of rape (effective July 2017) ● Establishment of support grants for victims of sexual offenses and sexual violence (FY2017) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → One-stop support centers for victims of sexual offenses and sexual violence established in 47 prefectures (as of October 2018) ● Introduction of helpline for victims of sexual offenses accessible on a single phone number nationwide (from August 2017) ● Promotion of efforts to eliminate sexual violence against young women ● Resolution on policy to strengthen sexual harassment countermeasures (June 2018) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Efforts to ensure more childcare options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Acceleration of the Plan for Raising Children in Peace of Mind to provide childcare for 320,000 children by the end of 2020 (included in the New Economic Policy Package issues in December 2017) → Establishment of 250,000 places in after-school childcare clubs by the end of 2021 and a total of 300,000 places by fiscal 2023 (included in the new comprehensive plan for after-school childcare issued in September 2019) ● Launch free early childhood education and care, and higher education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Revision of the Child and Child Care Support Act (enacted in May 2019) → Enactment of the Act to Support Studies in Universities, etc. (enacted in May 2019) ● Improvement of basis for long-term care services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Ensuring availability of additional long-term care personnel (Japan's Plan for Dynamic Engagement of All Citizens, issued in June 2016, sets a goal of 250,000) ● Revision of enforcement ordinance, etc. to enable to use the pre-marriage surnames alongside married names on documents including certificates of residence and Individual Number cards (enacted in April 2019) ● Revision and implementation of ordinance to enable production and sale of infant formulas in liquid form (August 2018)

Women's Full Participation in Economic Life across All Sectors

Systems and Structures

- Establishment of the Act on the Promotion of Female Participation and Career Advancement in the Workplace (fully effective April 2016)
Revisions to expand range of employers required to draw up action plans and reinforce information disclosure (enacted May 2019)
- Start of efforts to give additional points in public procurement to those promoting measures such as work-life balance, pursuant to Guidelines for Utilization of Public Procurement and Subsidies Toward the Promotion of Women's Advancement (from 2016)
→ FY2017 results for national agencies and independent administrative agencies: approximately 13,600 transactions worth around 1.34 trillion yen
- Establishment of grants for promoting active participation by women in regional communities (FY2017)
- Revision of Act on Securing, Etc. of Equal Opportunity and Treatment between Men and Women in Employment and other relevant regulations (revisions to prevent maternity harassment effective 2017, and measures to reinforce sexual harassment prevention measures enacted May 2019)
- Act on the Arrangement of Related Acts to Promote Work Style Reform (enacted June 2018)
- 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 (October 2014) and promotion of measures based on action plan devised from these guidelines
- Introduction of equal opportunity grants (equal opportunities at time of childbirth category to support male workers) (FY2016)
- Enactment of the Act on Promotion of Gender Equality in the Political Field (effective May 2018)

Projects

- Promotion of greater visibility in the political and economic fields
- Creation of support network for women working in science and engineering (membership of 194 organizations as of May 2019)
→ Summer science and engineering challenge events for female students (123 organizations held 165 events in FY2018, attracting around 24,000 participants)
- Training for female leaders to become corporate director candidates (from 2017)
- Measures to enable issuing of non-degree certificates for courses of 60 hours or more to encourage returning to study (from April 2019)
- Creation of the network for support female entrepreneurs (from FY2016; 10 locations throughout Japan)
- Encouragement for men to undertake housework and childcare through the Ikumen project, Sankyu Papa project, Otouhan campaign, etc.
- Convening of World Assembly for Women (WAW!) (held five times since 2014)