

**Report on Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the Outcomes of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Special Session of the General Assembly (2000) in the context of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and Adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**

**JAPAN**

## **List of Abbreviations**

<b>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</b>	<b>MOFA</b>
<b>Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry</b>	<b>METI</b>
<b>National Police Agency</b>	<b>NPA</b>
<b>Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare</b>	<b>MHLW</b>
<b>Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications</b>	<b>MIC</b>
<b>Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries</b>	<b>MAFF</b>
<b>Ministry of Justice</b>	<b>MOJ</b>
<b>Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology</b>	<b>MEXT</b>

## FOREWORD

This report reviews the progress of implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in Japan, in order to implement the commitment to the aims and objectives listed in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which was adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. Despite facing challenges in implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Japan has implemented its commitment by consistently identifying and taking action on said challenges.

The Cabinet under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, aiming to realize “a society in which all women shine” in Japan and abroad, has been increasing efforts in this regard, and recently achieved concrete results. On September 12 and 13 of 2014, “WAW! Tokyo 2014” (World Assembly for Women) was held by the initiative of Prime Minister Abe. About 100 national and international leaders who take active roles in issues concerning women attended the symposium and conducted substantive discussions on the efforts to promote active participation by women in Japan and throughout the world. 12 proposals entitled “WAW! To Do” were compiled. WAW! is to be held again in Japan in 2015.

Furthermore, on October 3, the government set up the “Headquarters for Creating a Society in which All Women Shine” so that women in various conditions exercise their female power, their maximum potentials in Japanese society. The Headquarters will lead to the revitalization of the Japanese society as they make their hope come true and shine. On October 10, Prime Minister Abe held the first meeting of the Headquarters for Creating a Society in which All Women Shine and compiled a “policy package for creating a society in which all women shine.” Also, on October 17, the Cabinet decided on a new bill on the facilitation of women's active roles in the workplace and enacted it in the 187<sup>th</sup> session of the Diet.

The government will work to ensure that the percentage of women in leadership

positions increases to at least 30% by 2020. In addition, the government will work on creating an environment in which women who have devoted themselves to housework and childcare can be actively engaged in society while taking advantage of those experiences.

In parallel with domestic policies, Japan will also actively address women's issues internationally. At the UN General Assembly General Debate on September 25 2014, Prime Minister Abe emphasized cooperation between the public and private sectors towards promotion of social participation of women along with securing the fundamental rights of health, education, and other rights. Prime Minister Abe pledged in his address at the General Assembly in 2013 that Japan would implement assistance in excess of 3 billion US dollars over three years aimed chiefly at advancing the status of women. The amount already implemented over the past year is 1.8 billion dollars (as of September 2014), more than half the amount pledged. As for contributions to UN Women, Japan has succeeded in increasing our contributions fivefold over the past year. Japan will continue to strengthen cooperation with UN Women, especially through the new UN Women Tokyo office that will be opened next year.

As Prime Minister Abe also mentioned during the UN General Assembly General Debate in 2014, the 20th century saw constant, profound harm to women's honor and dignity when conflicts broke out. Japan cannot and will not overlook the problem on sexual violence in conflict and will make efforts to ensure punishment of responsible persons, prevent future crimes, and support the victims of these atrocities, which is of top importance. Japan will stand at the forefront and lead the international community to make the 21st century a world with no human rights violations against women, and to eliminate sexual violence in conflict.

Japan will further continue action and initiatives on national, regional, and international levels, towards a solution for the challenges of gender equality, development, and peace as outlined in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for

Action. This will be accomplished through the promotion of protection of women's rights and the participation and empowerment of women.

## **Section 1: Overview Analysis of achievements and Challenges since 1995**

### **1. Achievements and Challenges Concerning the Promotion of Policies Related to Gender Equality**

#### **(1) Promotion Status of Policies Related to Gender Equality**

The Government of Japan has been promoting enrichment and reinforcement of Japan's national machinery through enactment of the Basic Act for Gender-Equal Society in 1999 and establishment of the Council for Gender Equality, and efforts, etc. based on the Basic Plan for Gender Equality. However, such efforts are still only partially completed. Therefore, the Cabinet decided on the Third Basic Plan for Gender Equality (hereinafter referred to as the Third Basic Plan) in December 2010. Based on the Plan, the Government reemphasized perspectives concerning [i] social and economic revitalization through women's active participation, [ii] gender equality for men and children, [iii] responses to people facing a variety of difficulties, [iv] elimination of all forms of violence against women, and [v] promotion of gender equality in local communities. On the premise of these perspectives, the Government is promoting efforts while setting the following as issues that should be addressed urgently during the five-year period of the Plan: [i] promotion of effective positive action, [ii] realization of a social system that allow more diverse lifestyles [iii] rebuilding of employment and safety nets, and [iv] enhancement of systems for promoting gender equality.

The Third Basic Plan set out 15 priority fields\* together with long-term policy directions up to the year 2020 and concrete measures to be implemented by the end of FY2015 for each field. In addition, the plan advocated promotion of effective, positive actions, and introduced positive actions by goal and timetable methods, with a set time limit and goal. As for achievement goals, the plan set 82 performance objectives (109 objectives in total), which is nearly twice as many as the number of objectives set in the Second Basic Plan for Gender Equality (42 objectives). The Government decided to actively work on the fields that it had not addressed in the past and the fields in which it had not been necessarily active, such as politics, justice and economy. As for statistical information and other data, the plan stipulates that as much gender-disaggregated data as possible should be collected, and ministries and agencies are carrying out appropriate measures.

(\* ) 15 priority Fields in the Basic Plan (those with a star were newly set)

(i) Expansion of women's participation in policy decision-making processes

- (ii) Reconsideration of social systems and practices and raise awareness from a gender-equal perspective
- (iii) Gender equality for men and children □
- (iv) Securing of equal opportunities and treatment between men and women in employment
- (v) Men's and women's work-life balance
- (vi) Promotion of gender equality aimed at bringing about vibrant agricultural, forestry, and fisheries communities
- (vii) Support for men and women facing living difficulties such as poverty ★
- (viii) Creation of an environment in which people such as the elderly, the disabled, and non-Japanese people can live comfortably ★
- (ix) Elimination of all forms of violence against women
- (x) Support for women's lifelong health
- (xi) Enhancement of education and learning to promote gender equality and to facilitate diversity of choice
- (xii) Gender equality in science and technology and academic fields ★
- (xiii) Promotion of gender equality in the media
- (xiv) Promotion of gender equality in the area of regional development, disaster prevention, environment, and others ★
- (xv) Respect for international regulations and contributions to the "Equality, Development and Peace" of the global community

The Government is aiming to strengthen the promotion system toward realization of a gender-equal society in organic collaboration with local governments and private organizations as well as reinforcing the national machinery. The Third Basic Plan stipulates "strengthening the monitoring role in relation to the practical implementation of the Third Basic Plan and the latest CEDAW concluding observations." In light of this, the Council for Gender Equality established the Specialist Committee on Monitoring in February 2011 in order to strengthen the monitoring role.

## **(2) Promotion of Women's Active Participation**

The Government is proactively implementing efforts to promote women's active participation. In particular, the Government recently appointed a minister in charge of support for women's empowerment and child-rearing in December 2012 under the policy that efforts will be made to

build a nation where all women can shine with self-confidence and pride in their own way of life, based on the recognition that utilization of women's empowerment and promotion of their participation in society are indispensable to the recovery of a strong Japanese economy.

Moreover, in April 2013, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe outlined his belief that it is important to realize a society where both men and women can easily balance work and child-raising. Based thereon, in relation to the promotion of women's active participation, the Prime Minister made the following two requests to financial circles: [i] all listed companies should proactively appoint women to board membership and managerial positions toward achieving the government goal, "30% in 2020;" to begin with, to appoint at least one women as a board member; [ii] all listed companies should make it easy for both men and women to take childcare leave and use the short-time working system until their child becomes three years old if they wish to do so.

It is also stated in the "Japan Revitalization Strategy – JAPAN is BACK" (hereinafter referred to as the Japan Revitalization Strategy), decided by the Cabinet in June 2013 in light of the above-listed requests, that the core part of the growth strategy is to make it possible for women to actively participate in society by sufficiently employing their dormant, great abilities. Specific measures are incorporated in the Japan Revitalization Strategy from three perspectives: [i] granting incentives to companies engaged in promoting women's active participation and support for balancing work and child-rearing, etc.; [ii] support for active participation corresponding to women's life stages; [iii] development of an environment where men and women can balance work and child-rearing/life. In particular, the Government is developing, in collaboration with the related office, ministries, and agencies and industrial circles, etc., the following measures capable of development from FY2013 in order of precedence: (i) support for companies by utilizing subsidy and tax measures; (ii) promotion of "visualization" of women's active participation in companies; (iii) increase of the childcare leave benefit; (iv) development of the Plan to Accelerate the elimination of Childcare Waiting List Project; (v) discussions on legislations on working hours from the perspective of work-life balance and labor productivity.

As one of such measures, in April 2014, the Gender Mainstreaming Division was established in the Foreign Policy Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) for the purpose of dealing with diplomatic issues related to the promotion of women's participation and reflecting broader gender viewpoints in diplomatic policies.

Furthermore, in the "Japan Revitalization Strategy Revised in 2014 – Japan's challenge

for the future -” (hereinafter referred to as the Revised Growth Strategy), decided by the Cabinet in June 2014, various measures were incorporated as specific measures to be newly taken in order to unleash the "power of women," Japan's greatest potential, to the utmost extent, and realize a society where women shine, from the following perspectives: (i) improvement of the environment of support for childcare and housework; (ii) arrangement of an environment to promote recruitment and appointment of women in companies, etc.; (iii) review of the tax and social security systems to make them neutral with respect to the working style. In particular, while further promoting the efforts to achieve the elimination of Childcare Waiting List Project, the Government will take comprehensive measures for the issue concerning the after school hours for children who have entered elementary school, which is described as the "1<sup>st</sup> Grade Barrier." Moreover, the Government will develop a women-friendly work environment, while comprehensively and intensively working on raising the percentage of women in leadership positions. Furthermore, to remove all barriers that hinder women's active participation, systems that exert an inhibitory influence over women's employment will be reviewed.

## **2. Principal Revisions to Laws Related to Promotion of Gender Equality**

(2009)

- Act for Partial Revision of the Act on the Welfare of Workers Who Take Care of Children or Other Family Members Including Child Care and Family Care Leave and the Employment Insurance Act (promulgated on July 1, 2009)

- Act for Partial Revision of the Act on Childcare Leave, etc. of National Public Employees (promulgated on November 30, 2009)

(2010)

- Act for Partial Revision of the Act on Childcare Leave, etc. of National Public Employees, etc. (promulgated on December 3, 2010)

(2011)

- Act for Partial Revision of the Basic Act for Persons with Disabilities (promulgated on August 5, 2011)

- Act for Partial Revision of the Civil Code, etc. (promulgated on June 3, 2011)

(2012)

- Act for Partial Revision of the Act for Securing the Proper Operation of Worker Dispatching

Undertakings and Improved Working Conditions for Dispatched Workers, etc. (promulgated on April 6, 2012)

- Act for Partial Revision of the Long-Term Care Insurance Act to Reinforce the Foundation of Long-Term Care Service (promulgated on June 22, 2011)

- Child and Child-Raising Support Act (promulgated on August 22, 2012)

- Act for Partial Revision of the National Pension Act, etc. to Strengthen the Financial Base and Minimum Guarantee Function of the Public Pension System (promulgated on August 22, 2012)

- Act on Special Measures Concerning Support for Employment of Mothers of Fatherless Households and Fathers of Motherless Households (promulgated on September 14, 2012)

(2013)

- Act on Promotion of Elimination of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (promulgated on June 26, 2013)

- Act for Partial Revision of the Act on the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims (promulgated on July 3, 2013)

- Act for Partial Revision of the Anti-Stalking Act (promulgated on July 3, 2013)

- Act on Leave for National Public Employees Who Accompany Spouses (promulgated on November 22, 2013)

- Act for Partial Revision of the Civil Code (promulgated on December 11, 2013)

(2014)

- Act for Partial Revision of the Employment Insurance Act (promulgated on March 31, 2014)

- Act for Partial Revision of the Act on Improvement, etc. of Employment Management for Part-Time Workers (promulgated on April 23, 2014)

- Act for Partial Revision of the Act on Advancement of Measures to Support Raising Next-Generation Children and Other Acts Designed to Promote Sound-upbringing of Children Who Bear Future-Generation (promulgated on April 23, 2014)

- Act on Arrangement of Relevant Laws for the Promotion of Overall Securing of Local Medical Care and Long-Term Care (promulgated on June 25, 2014)

### **3. Gender Equality Related Budget**

The transitions in the national gender equality related budget and budget related to gender equality and women of prefectures and cities designated by Cabinet Order are as follows.

(unit: million yen)

	National gender equality related budget	Budget related to gender equality and women of prefectures and cities designated by Cabinet Order
FY 2009	4,271,448	10,778
FY 2010	5,780,728	10,407
FY 2011	6,732,473	9,784
FY 2012	6,327,174	9,965
FY 2013	6,510,240	9,962
FY 2014	7,731,091	(Uncounted)

Note) The amounts of national gender equality related budget and budget related to gender equality of prefectures and cities designated by Cabinet Order for FY 2013 are initial amounts.

#### **4. Dialogues with citizens**

The Cabinet Office holds the Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality in order to enhance coordination by promoting exchange of information and opinions with people from various sectors of society and among NGOs. This conference holds “the Hearing” for exchanging information and opinions with people from various sectors of society, thereby striving to familiarize civil society with discussions conducted at international conferences, global norms and standards for improvement of the status of women, and guidelines for tackling the relevant issues and to actively incorporate them domestically.

#### **5. Publicity and Awareness Raising Activities, and Training, etc. Related to the Implementation of UN Conference Documents, etc.**

The Government inaugurated the “Gender Equality Week” to be held each year from June 23 to 29 to create momentum to facilitate various initiatives for the realization of a gender-equal society. Moreover, the Cabinet Office endeavors to create momentum and to enhance awareness for formation of building a gender-equal society, by conducting training courses for staff members of local governments and gender equality centers.

## **6. Gender and Development (GAD)**

### **(1) Initiatives through ODA**

In 2005, Japan announced the Initiative on GAD, aiming to promote gender mainstreaming broadly in its ODA through a series of processes from ascertaining needs to policy planning, formulation and implementation of programs, as well as monitoring and evaluation thereof. Japan has also continued assistance to eradicate causes of gender inequality through improving systems and policies of developing countries. In 2012, a third party evaluation of the ODA was conducted in regard to the Initiative on GAD with a focus on Japan's assistance for policies and institutions that promote gender equality. Based on this evaluation of the ODA, Japan is further striving to promote gender mainstreaming.

In order to contribute to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in particular, Japan publicized its new cooperative measures in the health and education fields at the UN General Assembly in 2010. Japan clearly expressed its intention to attach importance to the perspective of gender equality in these measures and has steadily been implementing them. Also, at the Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V), which was held in Yokohama in June 2013, a focus was placed on women, and the outcome document positioned the empowerment of women as one of the fundamental principles, emphasizing Japan's commitment to making efforts together with all stakeholders, including African countries and development partners. Moreover, upon his visits to African countries in January 2014, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced Japan's intention to focus on the empowerment of women and youth in Japan's foreign diplomacy with African countries. Moreover, at the First TICAD V Ministerial Meeting held in Cameroon in May 2014, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Fumio Kishida, stated in the special session, "Empowering Women and Youth," that the Government of Japan will provide the assistance necessary for the empowerment of women and youth in African countries.

In September 2013, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe expressed his intention to strengthen supports for realizing "A Society in Which Women Shine" in his address at the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. Specifically, he announced that Japan would implement ODA in excess of \$3 billion for the three years from 2013 to 2015, based on the three pillars: "Facilitating Women's Active Role/ Participation in society and Women's Empowerment," "Ensuring Japan's Efforts in the area of Women's Health Care," and "Supporting Women's Participation and Protecting their rights in the area of Peace and Security," and this policy is now

being steadily implemented.

## **(2) International Exchange and Cooperation in the Field of Education**

In cooperation with UNESCO, the leading agency for the Education for All movement, Japan contributes to the efforts being made to reach the goals set in the Dakar Framework for Action by providing the following support: [i] contribute to the Japanese Trust Fund for the Education for All Programme and the Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Promotion of Education in Asia and Pacific Region; [ii] support the Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre of UNESCO and the National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan to disseminate literacy education in the Asia-Pacific region; and [iii] implement the training course conducted by the National Women's Education Center, for overseas governmental organizations related to women's education and leaders of NGOs.

## **(3) Postal Savings for International Voluntary Aid**

The Management Organization for Postal Savings and Postal Life Insurance, Incorporated Administrative Agency contributes accrued interest on Postal Savings for International Voluntary Aid accounts to NGO aid programs in developing countries. Part of the contribution is used to assist women's independence by conducting training to improve their literacy, sanitation, nutrition, and also help them to acquire professional skills.

## **(4) Japanese Assistance to Women in Afghanistan**

The Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan was held in Japan in July 2012. Ensuring women's rights and elimination of violence against women were set as the goals and indicators to be implemented by the government of Afghanistan in the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF) annexed to the Tokyo Declaration, which was publicized as the outcome document. The international community is following up the progress made by the government of Afghanistan. The Cabinet Office held meetings of the Advisory Council on Assistance to Women in Afghanistan, which is organized by the Chief Cabinet Secretary, following up the outcomes of and challenges to Japanese assistance to Afghanistan.

## **7. Others**

Among principal revisions to laws related to promotion of gender equality, the Act for Partial

Revision of the Civil Code (promulgated on December 11, 2013) equalizes the shares in inheritance of a child born in wedlock and a child born out of wedlock, following that the Supreme Court of Japan issued a ruling to declare unconstitutionality of the provision of the Civil Code which designates the share in inheritance of a child born out of wedlock shall be one half of the share in inheritance of a child born in wedlock.

## **Section 2: Progress in the implementation of critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action after 2009**

### **A. Women and Poverty**

#### **1. Measures to Assist Social Participation and Independence of Persons Facing Difficulties in Their Lives**

The Special Committee on Monitoring and Gender Impact Assessment and Evaluation established within the Council for Gender Equality studied the problem of the diversifying and worsening situations of people facing difficulties in their lives such as single parent families including single mother families, victims of DV, employees in unstable employment, and foreigners, due to major change in the socioeconomic environment, and deliberated the appropriate measures to be taken to assist the social participation and independence of such people. In November 2009, the Committee published the results of the study and pointed out the issue of gender equality underlying the difficulties faced by people in their lives.

#### **2. Enrichment of Support for Fatherless Families, etc.**

Based on the Act on Special Measures concerning Support for Employment of Mothers in Fatherless Household and Fathers in Motherless Household (enforced in March 2013), the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) is endeavoring to enhance employment support measures for such mothers and fathers and to ask private business operators for cooperation.

#### **3. Measures for Women with Disabilities**

The Basic Act for Persons with Disabilities was revised in 2011 to add the provisions to the effect that “measures for supporting the independence and social participation of persons with disabilities shall be formulated and implemented according to the gender of the person with a disability and under an organic cooperation” to the basic policy for measures with women with disabilities in mind. Based on this, the Government incorporated the following in the Basic Programme for Persons with Disabilities as a cross-sectional perspective that is common to all fields of measures for persons with disabilities: measures shall be formulated and implemented in light of the necessity of support for persons with disabilities on a case-by-case basis according to the gender, age, conditions of disabilities and actual living conditions, and particularly, attention shall be paid

to the points that women with disabilities sometimes face multiple additional challenges due to being a woman and that children with disabilities require different supports from those for adults with disabilities.

Through the revision of the Basic Act for Persons with Disabilities in 2011, the provisions incorporating the philosophy of reasonable accommodation prescribed in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities were added to the Act in relation to prohibition of discrimination. The Act on Promotion of Elimination of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, which concretized these provisions, was enacted in June 2013. The Act stipulates that "necessary and reasonable accommodation for removal of social barriers shall be provided according to the gender, age and state of disabilities of the relevant person with disabilities."

The conclusion of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was approved by the Diet in December 2013. The Government of Japan conducted intensive reform of the domestic system for persons with disabilities in advance of the conclusion of the Convention. In the reform, the Government of Japan revised the Basic Act for Persons with Disabilities and the Act on Employment Promotion etc. of Persons with Disabilities and enacted the Act on the Prevention of Abuses against Persons with Disabilities and Support for Those Who Provide Protective Care for Persons with Disabilities, the Act on Development of Relevant Laws to Take New Health and Welfare Measures for Persons with Disabilities to Realize Harmonious Coexistence in Local Communities, the Act on the Promotion of Procurement of Goods from Facilities Where Persons with Disabilities Work by the State and the Act on Promotion of Elimination of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities.

#### **4. Measures for Elderly Women**

The Third Basic Plan states that efforts will be carried forward from the perspective of gender equality, specifically, support for the promotion of employment of the elderly and their social participation, development of the systems and environment leading to the economic independence of the elderly, efforts for realizing independent living so that the elderly can have a healthy existence in households and communities with peace of mind, efforts concerning medical care and nursing care prevention in consideration of differences between men and women, and establishment of high-quality medical and nursing care infrastructures.

In addition, the General Principles Concerning Measures for the Aging Society were decided by the Cabinet in September 2012 as a guideline for basic and comprehensive measures for the aging society. Related administrative organs aim to further promote such measures in line with the General Principles while collaborating and cooperating with each other.

In June 2014, in order to create a "comprehensive local care system" whereby medical, nursing care, prevention, habitation, and livelihood support services are provided without interruption so that the elderly can continue to live in familiar areas with peace of mind, the Act on Arrangement of Relevant Laws for the Promotion of Overall Securing of Local Medical Care and Long-Term Care was enacted.

## **5. Measures for Foreign Women**

The Third Basic Plan states that support will be carried forward according to the conditions of foreign women, taking into account the fact that foreign women face multiple additional challenges due to being a woman, as well as due to such difficulties as differences in language, culture and values, and isolation in the community. From the perspective of gender equality, related ministries and agencies are carrying forward measures concerning education, housing and job assistance for foreign nationals who work and live in Japan and provision of information and development of a consultation system for such persons in multiple languages, in light of the actual conditions.

### **B. Education and Training of Women**

#### **1. Reinforcement of Education and Learning to Promote Gender Equality**

The Courses of Study (government guidelines for teaching) revised in 2008 and 2009 continue to emphasize the importance of respect for human rights, equality of men and women, mutual understanding and cooperation, and creation of a family under mutual cooperation between men and women. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) utilizes the opportunities of national conferences, etc. to disseminate the details of the new Courses of Study to prefectural Boards of Education, etc. and provide them with guidance on the enhancement of schools' guidance systems and teaching materials and the provisions of training of teachers for implementing the new Courses of Study.

#### **2. Supporting Women in the Field of Science and Technology**

In the Third Basic Plan, “gender equality in science and technology, and academic fields” was newly established as one of the priorities. Furthermore, the 4th Science and Technology Basic Plan decided by the Cabinet in August 2011 set up a goal to increase the percentage of female researchers recruited in the natural science field as a whole to 30%. Based on this plan, the Comprehensive Strategy on Science, Technology and Innovation decided by the Cabinet in June 2013 set a goal to increase said percentage at universities and public research institutes to 30% by 2016. This goal has been continued and included in the Science and Technology Basic Plan 2014 decided by the Cabinet in June 2014.

In order to support and promote women’s activities in the field of science and technology, MEXT has been conducting projects, such as offering assistance to universities that are making outstanding efforts to enhance research abilities of female researchers and develop a favorable environment to enable them to balance their research with childbirth, child-raising, and nursing care, etc., and making efforts to encourage female junior and senior high school students to choose career paths in the scientific field. The Report of the Specialist Committee on Basic Issues and Gender Impact Assessment and Evaluation of the Council for Gender Equality (February 2012) presented concrete examples and best practices of research institutes that had adopted the goals and timetable method, and compiled measures to promote the development of an environment for expanding the participation of female researchers.

## **C. Woman and Health**

### **1. Health Support for Pregnancy and Childbirth**

A final evaluation report has been prepared for the 21st Century Sukoyaka Family National Campaign which was adopted to propose a vision for the principal measures for maternal and child health in the 21st century. Based on the future challenges and proposals presented in the report, etc., the second 21<sup>st</sup> Century Sukoyaka Family National Campaign is slated to commence from FY 2015.

Moreover, as one of the projects to support women who have worries concerning pregnancy, the Women’s Health Support Center and special centers for consultation on infertility were established as well as consultation support for pregnancy and infertility and to subsidize part of the cost of fertility treatment. Furthermore, since FY2014, a model project for comprehensive support for pregnancy and childbirth has been implemented in order to provide support for

pregnancy and childbirth without interruption.

## **2. Measures against Problems that Threaten Women's Health**

In January 2012, the MHLW revised the AIDS prevention guideline and has intensively taken measures for “dissemination, enlightenment, and education,” “improvement of test/ consultation systems,” and “provision of medical care service,” with respect for patients’ human rights.

### **D. Violence against Women**

#### **1. Efforts against Spousal Violence and Others**

Act on the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims (hereinafter referred to as the Spousal Violence Prevention Act) had been revised in July 2013 so as to also cover violence by intimate partners who share the principal place to live and victims thereof in the same way as spousal violence and victims thereof. In addition, the Basic Policy Concerning Measures for the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims established by competent ministers (the Prime Minister, the National Public Safety Commission, the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare) based on the Spousal Violence Prevention Act was also revised according to the aforementioned revision.

The Cabinet Office prepared the Start-up Manual on Independence Support for Victims of Spousal Violence in FY2011 based on the results of the Model Project for Independence Support for Victims of Spousal Violence implemented from FY2008 to FY2010, and distributed it to local governments and others. In the period from February to March 2011, the Cabinet Office also set up the “Purple Dial – telephone consultation for DV and sexual violence” to offer advice intensively regarding urgent needs.

Being subsidized by the MHLW, the Social Inclusion Support Center has established a free point of contact for consultation (Yorisoi Hotline) that is open 24 hours a day and 365 days a year as a point of contact providing consultation services for the poor and needy and victims of spousal violence, etc., including general worries in their lives. The Center provides such services not only in Japanese but also in seven other languages (English, Chinese, Korean, Tagalog, Thai, Spanish and Portuguese).

The police systematically promote prompt and appropriate responses to stalking cases and spousal violence cases, by making arrests of perpetrators through the active application of laws

and regulations and by taking protective measures for victims, while making the safety of victims the top priority. In addition, a process of support in decision making for the victims has been implemented since February 2013 as a new approach. Through this process, a victim of stalking or spousal violence is given information about the risk of the case and notified of damages and measures the police can take in an easy-to-understand manner using a diagram when he/she visits the police for consultation. Furthermore, since December of the same year, the police have utilized a “risk determination check-list,” whereby the police ask victims of stalking or spousal violence questions about items concerning the characters, etc. of themselves and perpetrators in the form of a questionnaire and determine the risk of the cases. The results are then used as reference materials in determining case risk.

Moreover, in order to reduce the burden on victims and prevent secondary damages, the police have improved the system for handling violence cases at night and on holidays, by increasing the numbers of female police officers on duty and educating them, so that when the female officers are required depending on the characteristics of cases or requests from the victims, they can respond. In addition, the police reinforce collaboration with related organizations and groups, related business operators, and others in relation to protection of victims, etc. and make efforts to promote publicity and awareness-raising activities.

The Japan Legal Support Center promotes establishment of further organic collaborative and cooperative relationships with the related organizations and groups to which the mutual collaboration should be ensured, such as councils organized based on the purpose of the Spousal Violence Prevention Act, by adequately understanding these organizations and groups.

## **2. Efforts against Stalking**

The Anti-Stalking Act was revised in July 2013. Major revisions includes restriction on the act of continuously sending e-mails, expansion of the jurisdiction of Prefectural Public Safety Commissions that can issue restraining orders or take other measures, establishment of a new request system for restraining orders or other measures, establishment of a new notification system concerning warnings and restraining orders or other measures upon request, and support measures for victims taken by women’s consulting offices and other organizations. Other measures taken by the police are mentioned in 1 above.

### **3. Promotion of Measures against Sex Crimes (Rape and Forcible Indecency)**

The study and deliberation at the Specialist Committee on Violence against Women of the Council for Gender Equality are mentioned in 6 below.

The Third Basic Plan states that “Consideration will be conducted on an ideal of penal provisions for sex crimes, including review of the crime of rape (making the crime of rape prosecutable ex officio, raising the age of consent to sexual intercourse, and review of requirements constituting the crime of rape, etc.). The Ministry of Justice (MOJ) is to conduct consideration thereon by the end of FY2015.” Based on this, the MOJ is conducting deliberations, including study of other countries’ legal systems concerning the crime of rape and other sex crimes and the current situation of punishment for such crimes in Japan.

### **4. Sexual Harassment Prevention**

The Labour Policy Council consisting of the representatives of the public sector, employers and employees conducted deliberations on future measures to promote equal employment opportunity and compiled a report in September 2013. In the report, the Council concluded that it is appropriate to revise the current guidelines that stipulate measures against sexual harassment. The MHLW revised the guidelines in December 2013 based on the report stating that although the guidelines assert that it is essential to have the causes and background of the occurrence of sexual harassment known to employees when clarifying a policy on sexual harassment and to make these known to employers and raise their awareness thereof, the guidelines are to be revised to clearly state that words and actions based on a sense of gender-based role-sharing are also included in the causes and background.

In order to raise awareness for the prevention of sexual harassment among the officials of ministries and agencies, the National Personnel Authority has designated the week from December 4th to 10th of every year as “National Public Employees’ Sexual Harassment Prevention Week,” and holds the Symposium on National Public Employees’ Sexual Harassment Prevention and other lectures that week. The Authority also prepares a pamphlet on sexual harassment prevention for supervisors and for newly recruited officials, respectively, and distributes this to ministries and agencies. In addition, the Authority conducts training for those who give advice on sexual harassment complaints. Furthermore, aiming to replace the existing training curriculum examples for newly recruited officials and for administrators, which the Authority has provided to ministries

and agencies in FY2009, the Authority recently developed Sexual Harassment Prevention Training, the content of which is appropriate for newly recruited officials, newly appointed supervisors, and administrators respectively, in order to raise awareness of sexual harassment prevention among officials and to have administrators and supervisors thoroughly understand the responsibilities and roles they should fulfill. The Authority implements this training, targeting officials in charge of the personnel affairs of ministries and agencies.

### **5. Protecting Youth from Sexual and Violent Information**

The Third Basic Plan contains specific measures concerning research study, such as the promotion of publicity and awareness-raising and promotion of measures for preventing distribution, directed against sexual and violent expressions used by the media, and related ministries and agencies are carrying forward relevant measures.

The Government decided the Second Comprehensive Measures to Eliminate Child Pornography, which summarizes measures the Government should take at an early date, at a Ministerial Meeting Concerning Measures Against Crime in May 2013. Based thereon, ministries and agencies are promoting measures in collaboration with citizens, business operators, related groups, and others.

In June 2014, we carried out verification and follow-up of the implementation of the above-mentioned Measures for FY 2013.

The Act on Punishment of Activities Relating to Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, and the Protection of Children was partially amended in June 2014. The act of possessing or storing child pornography or electromagnetic records of these for the purpose of satisfying one's own sexual curiosity and the act of producing child pornography by depicting a child secretly have become subject to punishment.

Based on the Act on Establishment of Enhanced Environment for Youth's Safe and Secure Internet Use, the Government decided the Second Basic Plan on Measures to Enable Youth to Safely Use the Internet at Ease in 2012. Based on this Basic Plan, the Government takes measures to minimize the opportunities for youth to view harmful information, including sexual and violent information, which significantly inhibits their healthy growth, via the Internet.

The police operate the Internet Hotline Center (hereinafter referred to as the IHC), whereby staff members receive reports concerning illegal and harmful information from Internet

users in general, report such information to the police and request site administrators to delete the information. This effort has produced definite results, including arrests of suspects and deletion of illegal and harmful information. Moreover, with regard to child pornography stored on foreign web servers, the IHC acceded to INHOPE, which was established as a mutual liaison organization for countries' hotlines, and is promoting measures in collaboration with the INHOPE member organizations. For example, the IHC requested that the INHOPE member organizations take measures for deletion of such child pornography.

The police have strengthened their crackdown on Internet-based child pornography crimes, and make efforts to gather information on child pornography cases through reports from the IHC, cyber patrols, and participation in the building of an international database on child pornography. In addition, the police provide information and give advice to the body to prepare and manage address lists of websites containing child pornography in relation to measures to prevent access to child pornography (blocking) taken by providers. Thereby, the police promote measures to enhance the effectiveness of blocking in collaboration with related organizations and bodies.

Moreover, the police try to disseminate points to note in using the Internet in collaboration with schools and other related organizations, taking into account the ongoing occurrence of cases in which young people are involved in crimes or trouble such as child prostitution through the use of online dating sites and community sites, in light of the circumstances where smartphones are rapidly proliferating among children. The police also facilitate dissemination of function-restricting applications to restrict certain applications from starting up and filtering. They also promote public relations and awareness-raising activities, targeting guardians. Furthermore, the police carry out measures such as support for voluntary introduction of effective zoning by business operators and confirmation of the content of emails exchanged between users of a website according to the size, form and status of efforts of business operators.

In addition to the above, the police provide lectures by information security advisers, using opportunities such as workshops hosted by the police or a provider liaison council in order to improve citizens' knowledge about information security and awareness of rules in cyberspace. The police also disseminate information about methods employed in cybercrimes and the current situation of and measures against illegal and harmful information on the Internet through the National Police Agency (NPA)'s website, publicity and awareness-raising pamphlets, DVDs on information security measures and other means.

Moreover, in order to eliminate the harmful effect of sex entertainment businesses on youth, the police endeavor to understand the actual conditions of the malicious crimes of organizationally forcing children to serve as prostitutes in entertainment districts and amusement areas and businesses that trade on the sexual conduct of youth, and impose thorough controls over them. Furthermore, the police implement activities to remove illegal and harmful advertising, including bills about information on sex by sex-oriented entertainment establishments, in cooperation with related organizations and bodies.

In 2009, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) established a hotline for consultation on illegal/harmful information for the purpose of promoting appropriate handling of illegal and harmful information on the Internet. This hotline accepts inquiries and questions about illegal and harmful information and safety and security in an internet environment from related persons, gives advice about the handling of posts, methods of deletion and other issues, and provides relevant information.

In addition, the MIC is implementing demonstrations of blocking experiments for three years from 2011, which is one of the measures to prevent distribution and viewing of child pornography on the Internet, so that ISPs and other related business operators can improve the effectiveness of voluntary blocking. Due consideration is given to ensure there are no unjust effects on Internet users' privacy of communications and freedom of expression, thereby facilitating voluntary introduction of blocking.

## **6. Activities to Eliminate Violence**

The Specialist Committee on Violence against Women of the Council for Gender Equality compiled problems to be solved to eliminate violence against women and measures to solve them in June 2011, with a central focus on the results of "Purple Dial – telephone consultation for DV and sexual violence" (mentioned in 2 above). Furthermore, with regard to promotion of measures against sex crimes, the committee compiled strict measures against sex crimes through review of the crime of rape and support for and consideration to victims in July 2012 after going through intensive study and deliberation. In April 2014, follow-up for the implementation of measures related to the prevention of spousal violence was conducted.

The Cabinet Office conducted a Survey on Violence between Men and Women in FY2011 to gain an understanding of the actual conditions of violence between men and women in

Japan.

## **7. Efforts against Trafficking in Persons**

In light of the changes in circumstances concerning trafficking in persons, the Government formulated Japan's 2009 Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons in December 2009, with the aim of appropriately addressing concerns regarding the issue and promoting a whole-of-government approach on an ongoing basis. Since the formulation of the action plan, related ministries and agencies have cooperated with each other to steadily implement measures by following up the progress thereof at meetings of the Inter-Ministerial Liaison Committee.

Based on Japan's 2009 Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons, related ministries and agencies have been promoting awareness-raising activities targeting the potential perpetrators of sexual exploitation by publicizing the fact that many of the trafficked victims are subject to sexual exploitation such as prostitution. Besides, as child prostitution committed by Japanese nationals traveling abroad is not only illegal under Japanese laws and regulations but also furthers trafficking in persons in the countries concerned, efforts have been made to raise awareness of potential perpetrators of sexual exploitation through posters and distribution of leaflets at travel agencies and passport centers in Japan, aiming to prevent travelers abroad from becoming involved in child prostitution.

Further, for the purpose of ascertaining and analyzing the actual status of trafficking in persons cases and sharing information with foreign governments, the Government Delegation on Anti-Human Trafficking Measures, comprised of ministries and agencies concerned, was dispatched to 21 countries in total, mainly to ASEAN countries, and most recently to the Philippines in February 2014.

From the perspective of eliminating violence against women, the Cabinet Office, in collaboration and cooperation with related ministries, agencies and local governments, conducts public information and awareness-raising activities including producing posters, leaflets and videos regarding measures to eradicate trafficking in persons, targeting the general public and foreign residents in Japan.

Mainly in areas where a crime of trafficking in persons has occurred, the police hold opinion exchange meetings and lectures and adopt declarations to improve an environment that will prevent the creation of another victim through a joint effort by the police and local residents.

National Women's Education Center conducted research on trafficking in persons and prepared information panels and booklets compiling the results thereof. The Center lends out these panels and booklets and discloses them on its website, thereby providing information widely to the general public.

Under the slogan of "Stop Trafficking in Persons," as one of the annual priority matters of promotion activities, the Human Rights Organs of the MOJ conduct promotion activities, such as distributing leaflets, nationwide throughout the year. Furthermore, the Organs provide consultations at their counseling offices and if they recognize a case suspected of falling under human rights infringement through the aforementioned consultation services, etc., they conduct the necessary investigations and take appropriate measures depending on the cases in collaboration and cooperation with related organizations.

With an aim of information sharing and strengthening of cooperation between Japan and ASEAN for the eradicating of the trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children, the ASEAN Workshop to Combat Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children was held in Jakarta in July 2012, utilizing the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF). Furthermore, as an effort made through international organizations, continuously from 2005, the Government has been supporting the repatriation of foreign trafficked victims in Japan and assisting their social reintegration after returning home through the International Organization for Migration (IOM). In addition, the Government has been providing support for countermeasures against trafficking in persons through the Trust Fund for Human Security established in the United Nations, the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Fund of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and the Grant Assistance for Grass-roots Human Security Projects, etc., targeted to the source countries of trafficked victims.

#### **E. Women and Armed Conflict**

In September 2013, MOFA began to formulate the National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security, regarding the UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and other relevant resolutions. MOFA has been holding small consultation group meetings, consisting of the representatives of MOFA and other ministries and of civil society organizations in order to develop discussions on aspects including the structure of the Action Plan, elements to be included, the course of processes, and specific drafts of policies (such as the goal, specific measures and

indicators), through the dialogue with civil society. In addition, meetings have been held for dialogue with civil society in four locations starting with Okinawa Prefecture. Based on these the draft of the Plan has been open for public comments.

As of June 2014, a total of 106 female Self-Defense Forces (SDF) members participated in international peace cooperation activities in South Sudan and other locations; 146 in humanitarian and reconstruction assistance activities in Iraq; and 84 in support activities in the Indian Ocean area to cope with international terrorism. Those female SDF members were placed in charge of operations in areas such as health care, transportation and communications.

## **F. Women and the Economy**

### **1. Efforts for Promotion of Women's Active Participation**

The details of development of the Japan Revitalization Strategy are as described in Section 1.

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) offered a short-term intensive training course called the "business inauguration class," in which 30 hours of training were provided to help trainees develop the practical skills they needed to start a business, targeting those who had specific action plans for starting a business up to FY2010. There were also classes geared towards women. A total of 4,952 women participated in the classes offered at 162 locations nationwide during a five-year period from FY2006 to FY2010.

In 2012, the Government started providing support for businesses that stimulate regional demand by calling for business plans from women and youth who newly started or inaugurated a business or conducted a second business inauguration (conversion of a business or development into a new business or a new field in cases where the successor takes over a business from the predecessor at an SME or a small-scale business that has already been running a business) and subsidizing part of the expenses required for the implementation of the plans.

### **2. Promotion of Measures to Secure Equal Employment Opportunities**

Based on the Supplementary Provisions of the Revised Equal Employment Opportunity Act, etc., the Labour Policy Council consisting of the representatives of the public sector, employers and employees held deliberations on future measures to be taken for ensuring equal employment opportunity and compiled a report in September 2013. It is noted that the details of the Important Notice Concerning Employment Management for the Dual Career Ladder System should be further

clarified and be compiled into guidelines in order to ensure that business owners adopting the dual career ladder system will properly manage employment in compliance with the Equal Employment Opportunity Act. Some of these business owners have a requirement concerning a transfer resulting in a relocation of residence specifically for main career track employees, for example. However, the aforementioned report reviewed the current MHLW Ordinance, which specifies requirements to be recognized as indirect discrimination, and concluded that setting any requirement concerning a transfer resulting in a relocation of residence, without any justifiable reason, upon recruitment, hiring, and promotion, etc. of all employees is to be recognized as indirect discrimination. In response to the report by the Labour Policy Council, the MHLW revised its Ordinance and formulated the guidelines in December 2013, and will continue making efforts to ensure compliance with the Act so that the adoption of the dual career ladder system will not result in de facto employment management by gender.

### **3. Development of Employment Conditions for the Diversifying Forms of Employment**

Making part-time work a satisfactory form of employment is essential in order to utilize women's skills and abilities. In June 2012, the Labour Policy Council submitted a recommendation to the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare to suggest the deletion of a requirement concerning non-fixed-term labor contracts from the provisions to prohibit discriminatory treatment. Based on this recommendation, Act for Partial Revision of the Act on Improvement, etc. of Employment Management for Part-Time Workers, which includes the further reinforcement of measures to ensure treatment of part-time workers equal to and in balance with ordinary workers, and to make part-time workers feel more satisfied with their treatment, was established in April 2014. From now on, efforts will be taken to ensure smooth enforcement of the Act, including the diffusion of information on the details of the revision.

The Act to Partially Revise the National Pension Act, etc. was enacted and promulgated in August 2012 for the purpose of strengthening the financial base of the public pension system and its function as the minimum safeguard. The revisions will be enforced in October 2016 to [i] apply social insurance to non-regular workers to strengthen the safety net, thereby correcting gaps in social insurance, and [ii] to expand the coverage of the employees' pension system and health insurance system to include short-hour workers with the aim of increasing women's desire for employment.

In 2012, the Act to Partially Revise the Act for Securing the Proper Operation of Worker Dispatching Business and Improved Working Conditions for Dispatched Workers was enforced with the aim of protecting dispatched workers and ensuring their stable employment. This Revising Act clearly states that the purpose of the Worker Dispatching Act is to protect dispatched workers, and aims to strengthen protection of dispatched workers and stabilize their employment by newly introducing such provisions as to prohibit temporary staffing on a daily basis for a period of 30 days or shorter, in principle, to promote conclusion of non-fixed-term labor contracts with dispatched workers, and to grant them balanced treatment with other coworkers.

In April 2013, the Revised Labour Contract Act was fully enforced, which aims at the realization of a society in which fixed-term contract workers can continue to work without anxiety through the elimination of their unstable position with the possibility of non-renewal of their contracts and through the correction of unreasonable working conditions due to the fact that their contracts are valid only for certain period of time. The Revised Act introduced the following three new rules: [i] a mechanism that converts fixed-term labour contracts into open-ended labour contracts as requested by the workers in cases in which fixed-term labour contracts are renewed repeatedly; [ii] statutory status of the doctrine of *yatoi-dome* that is established by precedent (termination of labour contract by employers is prohibited under some circumstances); (iii) a rule that prohibits the imposition of working conditions on fixed-term contract workers unreasonably different from those of open-ended contract workers on the grounds of fixed-term labour contracts.

#### **4. Equal Remuneration in Respect of Work of Equal Value**

Regarding the issue of wage disparity between men and women, the MHLW formulated guidelines in August 2010 presenting perspectives as follows: [i] review the systems for wage and employment management; [ii] review the operation of wage and employment management; [iii] promote positive actions. The Ministry prepared a pamphlet for the Guidelines so that the details thereof can be properly understood by workers and employees. The pamphlet is on the MHLW website and is utilized at various opportunities, such as company visits by administrative staff, to disseminate the content.

With the aim of making the Guidelines more user-friendly and more broadly used, the MHLW held discussions with users' organizations and labor unions from various industrial sectors from FY2011 and prepared the "Support Tools for 'Visualization' by Business Type" (hereinafter

referred to as Support Tools for Visualization) based on features of actual employment management by type of business, and the manual showing how to utilize the Support Tools for Visualization.

In response to a criticism from the International Labour Organization (ILO) that Japan had failed to provide sufficient information on its interpretation of Article 4 of the Labor Standards Act in relation to the Convention concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value (ILO Convention No. 100), the MHLW revised, in December 2012, the circular notice giving the interpretation of the Labor Standards Act, and added case examples of violations to the aforesaid Article in reference to judicial precedents, with the aim of clarifying Japan's interpretation. The Ministry prepared a pamphlet to show judicial precedents concerning said Article to make it possible for business owners to check whether their wage systems have substantially resulted in gender discrimination. In cases where a violation to the Labor Standards Act, etc. is suspected, related organizations will share information and take required measures.

## **5. Establishment of Child Care and Family Care Systems**

The new Broad Outline for the Countermeasures to the Declining Birth Rate in the Society decided by the Cabinet decision in January 2010 cites three fundamental attitudes for implementing measures to support children and child-raising: [i] value life and growth; [ii] answer the voices of those who seek help; [iii] support the living. Based on these three fundamental attitudes, the Broad Outline describes concrete measures and goals for the five years from FY2010 to FY2014, in line with the "4 pillars of policy for the ideal society" and "the 12 major initiatives".

With the aim of offering support to all children and their families, a new system to support children and child-raising is scheduled to commence in April 2015, in order to quantitatively and qualitatively improve early childhood education and care, as well as local programs for supporting children and child-raising, including the solution of the issue of children wait-listed for admission to day care centers. As for the financial source to establish the system, it is assumed that the expected revenue increase as a result of the consumption tax rate hike will be utilized as well as other appropriate financial sources.

Based on the Work-Life Balance Charter and the Action Guidelines for Promoting Work-Life Balance (hereinafter referred to as the Action Guidelines), public-private efforts have been made for achieving work-life balance.

The Action Guidelines set up 14 numerical goals toward 2020, such as the ratio of employees working 60 hours or longer per week and the ratio of female workers continuing working before and after giving birth to their first child. The Work-Life Balance Promotion and Evaluation Committee established under the Council of Executives of Public and Private Sectors to Promote Work-Life Balance utilizes these numerical goals and checks and evaluates the current conditions and progress in efforts, as well as future problems and challenges for achieving the goals. Regarding the indicators for which achievements are delayed, such as the ratio of employees working 60 hours or longer per week, the ratio of taking annual paid leave, the ratio of male workers taking child care leave, hours spent on child-raising and housework by husbands with children aged under six, not only workers and employers but also the national and local governments that support efforts by various entities are to discuss how to respond to identified problems in order to make improvements in these indicators and will accelerate the overall efforts for achieving work-life balance.

In order to establish an environment wherein children who will assume the leading role in the next-generation society, the national Government, local governments, business owners, and the public are all engaged in promoting measures to support the development of the next generation from their respective positions, based on the Act for Measures to Support the Development of the Next Generation. According to the partial revision of the Act for Measures to Support the Development of the Next Generation in December 2008, [i] those obliged to formulate and submit a general business owner action plan were expanded to companies with 101 or more employees (formerly limited to companies with 301 or more employees), and [ii] those obliged to formulate and submit a general business owner action plan were required to make it public and disseminate it among employees. Although the Act was enacted as temporary legislation until the end of FY2014, the bill for the revision of the Act including the 10-year expansion of its valid period and the creation of the new certification (special certification) system, was submitted to the 186th Session of the Diet, and was enacted in April 2014.

In June 2010, the MHLW started the “Ikumen (men taking care of children) Project” with the aim of generating social momentum to create a society where male workers can actively enjoy child-raising and feel free to take child care leave. More specifically, the Ministry has been providing related information by such means as calling for Ikumen Declaration and Ikumen Supporter Declaration on its official website, preparing handbooks and other PR materials, and

holding symposiums. In July 2013, as part of this project, the Ikumen Company Award was created. Companies that actively support male participation in child-raising and try to improve business operations are awarded and their efforts are introduced broadly. In June 2014, the “Ikuboss Award” was newly created to recognize and publicize supervisors and managers who support their staff and employees in maintaining the balance between child-raising and work. Thus, efforts to support men’s participation in child-raising and ensure the balance with their work are being promoted by companies and offices. In addition, the Ikumen Confederation consisting of multiparty Diet members was established in 2012 and the Parenting Alliance by prefectures actively taking child-raising support measures, with the participation of a prefectural governor who himself took child care leave, was inaugurated in 2013. Thus, moves to encourage male workers to take child care leave are prevailing among Diet members and prefectural governors.

The Employment Insurance Committee of the Labour Policy Council compiled a report in December 2013, in which it was suggested that “the childcare leave benefit rate should be raised to 67% for the first six months of the child care leave in order to further encourage both men and women to take child care leave.” In response, the Government submitted a bill to revise the Employment Insurance Act in the 186rd Session of the Diet, and the revision was enacted in March 2014.

In order to promote the re-employment of women who quit their jobs for child care or nursing care, the Seminar to Support Women’s Re-Employment with Day Nursery will be held from FY2014, and it is scheduled that a website, “Site to Support the Comeback in Work and Child-Raising (tentative name),” be established. In addition, in FY2014, the Research and Study Project Related to the Re-employment of Women who Quit their Jobs for Childbirth and Child Care is being conducted with the aim of establishing an employment environment that implements research and study on employment management for women to maintain the balance between child-raising and work while reestablishing their career path. At the same time, in place of the Compatible Support Hello Work Centers, the MHLW established public employment security offices called Mothers’ Hello Work to assist child-raising mothers and others to seek employment. These offices were arranged in such a way that mothers would not hesitate to visit them with their children. Personnel in charge provide career counseling and job placement services tailored to individual situations and needs for child-raising mothers who are ready to reenter employment.

In August 2009, the National Personnel Authority submitted opinions to the Diet and the

Cabinet to revise the Act on Childcare Leave, etc. of for National Public Employees in order to allow a government employee to take child care leave even if his/her spouse is on child care leave and make it possible for a government employee who has taken his/her first child care leave within a certain period after the childbirth to take a second child care leave. Upon receiving these opinions, the Government submitted a bill to partially revise the Act on Childcare Leave, etc. of National Public Employee. This Act for partial revision was enacted in November 2009 and was put into effect in June 2010. Furthermore, the National Personnel Authority revised the Rules of the National Personnel Authority in March 2010 to improve the system of leave for nursing children and to introduce a short-term family care leave system upon the enforcement of the Act. In 2010, the National Personnel Authority and the Government revised the Act on Childcare Leave, etc. of National Public Employee and developed related systems (enforced in April 2011) to also allow part-time government employees to take child care leave and family care leave for the purpose of assisting them in balancing life at work and family life. Moreover, in order to promote a supportive environment for balancing work and family life, the National Personnel Authority revised the Guidelines Concerning the Utilization of the System to Support Employees to Balance Work and Child/Family Care, upon developing systems as mentioned above, and established a liaison council to follow up efforts made by each ministry and agency.

As a proverb says, “Whoever suggests should start,” and the Japan Revitalization Strategy urges public employees to take the initiative in promoting recruitment and appointment of women and supporting male and female employees’ work-life balance. With regard to support for employees in balancing work and child-rearing, the Minister of State for Gender Equality requested the President of the National Personnel Authority to consider necessary measures concerning female national public employees’ separation from the service due to the transfer of their spouses, which is one of the major causes hindering career continuance. In light of the fact that it is essential for society as a whole to support work-life balance and also taking into account personnel management at each ministry and agency, the National Personnel Authority submitted opinions to suggest the enactment of an act to create a leave system for national public employees who accompany transferred spouses. Based on these opinions, the MIC submitted a bill for the Act on Leave for National Public Employees Who Accompany Spouses to the 185th extraordinary Diet session. The bill was enacted and promulgated in November 2013.

Through repeated reviews from the viewpoint of offering support for the development of

the next generation, it was determined in 2004 that [i] a worker on child care leave is to be exempted from the payment of social insurance premiums until the child reaches three, although this period is to be counted as a period for having paid premiums when receiving social insurance benefits, and that [ii] when a worker continues working while raising children aged under three and his/her compensation immediately after returning to work is lower than before, insurance premiums are to be calculated based on the compensation after returning to work but the amount of pension is to be calculated on the basis of his/her compensation before taking child care leave. Based on the Act to Partially Revise the National Pension Act, etc. for Strengthening Financial Base of the Public Pension System and its Function as the Minimum Safeguard, enacted and promulgated in August 2012, the same measures shall be applied for maternity leave from April 2014.

In order to solve the issue of children wait-listed for admission to day care centers, efforts have been made to increase the capacity of day care centers, but still many children are on a wait-list, mainly in urban areas. Although the number has decreased for the third year in a row, there were approximately 22,700 children on a wait-list as of April 2013.

With the aim of eliminating these wait-lists by the end of FY2017, when the need for nursery care is expected to peak, the Prime Minister publicized the Plan to Accelerate the Zero Childcare Waiting List Project in April 2013. Under this Plan, the Government will offer full support to local governments in their efforts to develop day care centers and ensure nursery staff with the goal of increasing the capacity by 200,000 children in the first two years from FY2013 and by a total of 400,000 children in five years up to the end of FY2017.

The MHLW supports municipalities that have family support centers (738 centers as of the end of FY2013), whose members comprise workers, housewives and others in the process of raising infants, elementary school children and others. Through mutual aid activities, these centers link and coordinate those looking for assistance in finding a place to leave their children while they work with those desiring to provide such assistance. Since FY2009, the MHLW has been conducting a new program to take care of sick or convalescent children and to meet urgent needs for nursery care, such as early in the morning or during night.

To meet the diversifying needs of parents with kindergarten children, “day care” service, provided both prior to and after normal school hours and during long vacations, is being expanded. Approximately 81% of the kindergartens nationwide provided such service as of 2012.

## **6. Special Protection of Women during Pregnancy**

The MHLW set up a website that provides companies and working women with information concerning maternity health management. Through this website, the Ministry introduces related systems, best practices and examples of working regulations, thereby promoting efforts for better maternity health management at workplaces. The revised Regulations on Labour Standards for Women, which was put into effect in October 2012, prohibit any workplaces using 25 chemical materials that may affect women's pregnancy, childbirth, and breast-feeding from assigning female workers, irrespective of their age or pregnancy status, to a duty requiring the use of a respirator or any duty under an environment where the average concentration of hazardous materials exceeds the standard control concentration. Furthermore, the revised Regulations on Labour Standards for Women, which were put into effect in January 2013, expanded the coverage to include ethyl benzene.

## **7. Special Attention to Rural Women**

The new Basic Plan for Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas was formulated in accordance with the Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas Basic Act in March 2010 and the Third Basic Plan for Gender Equality was formulated in December 2010. These plans contain clear and specific measures for promoting participation of women. The basic plan formulated in March 2012 based on the Fisheries Basic Act and the basic plan formulated in July 2011 based on the Forest and Forestry Basic Act also provide for the promotion of participation of women. In line with these basic plans based on Basic Acts, comprehensive efforts have been made towards creating a gender-equal society in rural areas.

In order to further promote participation of women based on the Basic Plan for Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas, agricultural cooperatives and other organizations are encouraged to increase numbers of female officials and members. More specifically, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) has established a goal to eliminate agricultural organizations without any female officials or members and issues guidance notices to related organizations.

While the participation ratio of women in decision-making processes for policies and administrative measures in rural areas remains low, it has been on the rise steadily in recent years. Since 2012, women have accounted for over 30% of the members discussing the Farmers and Farmland Plan, which specifies ideal forms of core management entities and local agriculture.

The population of workers engaged in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries is expected to decline significantly in the future. It is therefore necessary to cultivate the widest range of human resources in these industries. To do so, efforts must be made to create an environment where motivated women can make full use of their capabilities and participate in their local communities as they make policy regarding these industries or management. To this end, steps are being taken including the provision of information and training for promoting participation of women in management and the promotion of the development of female managers' networks.

A survey conducted in 2012 shows that around 70% of women participate in deciding farm management policies and 47% consider themselves managers. Thus, their participation in farm management has progressed. An increasing number of rural women start businesses, such as processing local agricultural or fisheries products, selling such products at farm stands, or opening a restaurant. There were 9,757 such cases in 2010. Businesses with sales over 10 million yen are steadily increasing and contribute to the improvement of women's economic status and the diversification and stabilization of women's business management, as well as to the revitalization of local communities. Participation of women in management is further promoted, such as through the provision of information and training therefor, and the promotion of the development of female managers' networks and the information exchange and collaboration among different types of business.

The number of farm households that have concluded Family Business Agreements that set wages, number of holidays and other matters on the basis of negotiations among family members is increasing year by year and were approximately 52,000 in number in 2013.

The Basic Plan for Food, Agriculture and Rural Area clearly states that rural women play a significant role in farming and the revitalization of local communities, and encourages the conclusion of Family Business Agreements from the viewpoint of promoting women's participation in farm management and business startups and clarifying their status as executive female farmers. In 2006, the system of accreditation of farmers was revised and married couples running a farming business with joint ownership are now accredited as certified farmers. Since then, female certified farmers have been increasing. Women who are playing a significant role in farming and the revitalization of local communities are also expected to play a leading role in creating a so-called "sixtic industry" (increase of added value by integrating production, processing and sale of agricultural and fisheries products and creation of new industry by utilizing local

resources). Therefore, female farmers' auxiliary activities are being promoted so that they can exert their abilities to the fullest.

## **G. Women in Power and Decision Making**

### **1. Women's Participation in the Decision Making Process for Government Policies and Measures**

The Third Basic Plan sets as its goal “raising the percentage of women in leadership positions in all fields of society to at least around 30% of the total by 2020,” and also sets promotion of effective positive action as a further goal. Positive action measures by goal and timetable methods for which the time limit and goal are set were introduced for all priority fields.

The Third Basic Plan also sets as its goals raising the percentage of women amongst all members of the national advisory councils and committees to 40% or more and 60% or less and raising the percentage of women amongst all expert members of the national advisory councils and committees to 30% by 2020. At present, the Government is proactively appointing women to the national advisory councils and committees to achieve these goals.

Furthermore, the Third Basic Plan sets goals of raising the percentage of women amongst all national public employees recruited through recruit examination for national public employees to around 30% and raising the percentage of women in positions such as director of a division or director-general of an office of a ministry of the State or a higher position to around 5% by the end of FY2015.

In December 2012, the Specialist Committee on Monitoring and Gender Impact Assessment and Evaluation of the Council for Gender Equality concluded that it is necessary to further reinforce goal and timetable methods that make up the current positive action measures because, at the promotion stage, the percentage of women in managerial positions is low, although it is difficult to make the implementation of a quota system by law or regulation obligatory because the status of recruitment of national public employees is getting closer to the goal set by the Third Basic Plan. In response to this, the Council for Gender Equality requested the Government to make such efforts as promotion of active participation of female national public employees in April 2013.

The Japan Revitalization Strategy also states that efforts for enlargement of the recruitment and promotion of female public employees will be made from the perspective of “practice what you preach.” On that basis, in 2013 and 2014, the Minister of State for Gender

Equality requested ministers to promote the recruitment and promotion of female national public employees while showing them the current value for each ministry. Such effort will be continuously carried forward.

The National Personnel Authority revised the “Guideline Concerning the Expanding Initial Appointment and Promotion of Female National Public Employees” in January 2011 in light of the Third Basic Plan. The revised Guideline stipulates the goals for each appropriate division, such as the entire ministry, division and department, and provides that specific efforts toward achieving goals will be set, and to develop and utilize human resources through utilization of Personnel Evaluation, to review the factors that inhibit promotion of female national public employees and the necessity of job relocation, diversification of career paths and other matters and that female national public employees will be given appropriate guidance and training when they are granted job experience and necessary support will be provided thereafter. Ministries are working on the recruitment and promotion of female national public employees based on the revised Guidelines. In addition, the National Personnel Authority holds the Seminar by Female National Public Employees for Women mainly based on opinion exchange between participants and female national public service and the Live Discussion for Women in which female administrative employees give lectures on important policy issues, the appeal of public duties and the actual conditions of their work, in collaboration with ministries based on the revised Guidelines, thereby proactively conducting recruiting and awareness-raising activities.

## **2. Support for Measures Taken by Private Corporations, Educational and Research Institutes, and Other Organizations and Groups**

Since FY2012, the MHLW has been directly encouraging corporations to promote positive action measures and to facilitate disclosure of information about the status of women’s active participation by utilizing the Positive Action Information Portal Site. Since July 2010, this site has been offering comprehensive information provision services concerning positive action through unification of the Positive Action Support Site, whereby people can inspect and conduct searches for the content of corporations’ positive action measures, the women’s active participation promotion declaration site on which corporations intending to promote positive action measures put their own messages and the outcome of the status of promotion of women’s active participation, whereby corporations can self-evaluate the status of promotion of positive action measures through comparison with

corporations in the same industry or of the same scale.

Moreover, the MHLW gives the Corporation Award for the Promotion of Gender Equality/Work-Life Balance by publicly seeking corporations that are proactively promoting positive action. Furthermore, as it is vital to increase awareness of top management to promote positive action at corporations, the MHLW has held meetings of the Positive Action Promotion Council in collaboration with employer's associations and top management. The MHLW conducts activities to promote positive actions, such as preparing the Collection of Messages about Positive Action, which provides messages from corporations that are taking positive action measures and women playing an active part in a corporation, in FY2011. Moreover, the MHLW held the Forum on Company Management and Positive Actions in October 2013 to promote positive action at corporations.

As an economic incentive for corporations that are taking positive action measures, the MHLW introduced a system in FY2013 to grant subsidies to business operators who have achieved their positive action numerical goals.

In December 2012, the Specialist Committee on Monitoring and Gender Impact Assessment and Evaluation of the Council for Gender Equality drew a conclusion of discussions concerning desirable projects to support women's active participation, consideration of measures to promote women's active participation through public procurement and other issues mainly from the legislative perspective. In response to this, the Council for Gender Equality requested the Government to make such efforts as promotion of women's active participation through public procurement and various other assisting projects, as well as facilitation of disclosure of the status of women's active participation at corporations in April 2013. The Cabinet Office has requested ministries, local governments and local incorporated administrative agencies to carry forward efforts through public procurement.

Furthermore, the Japan Revitalization Strategy states that the Government will carry forward various measures centering on three pillars, such as the granting of incentives to corporations that are working on the promotion of women's active participation, as explained above. In particular, with regard to making the status of women's active participation in corporations visible, the status of appointment of women to board memberships and managerial positions at individual corporations and targets therefore, women's duration of service, the number of women who have taken child care leave, the ratio of women who have taken annual paid holidays and

overtime hours are available to the public on the Cabinet Office's website. The Revised Growth Strategy includes the obligation to enter the percentage of women executive officers in financial statements and requests financial instruments exchanges to ask listed companies to state the status of appointment of women to board memberships and managerial positions and their efforts for promoting appointment of women in reports concerning corporate governance to be submitted to financial instruments exchanges. Moreover, the Cabinet Office has encouraged corporations to voluntarily disclose the status of women's activities in reports concerning corporate governance, etc. since 2013.

The Third Basic Plan raised the performance objective for the proportion of female university professors, etc. to 30% and encourages colleges and universities to take voluntary efforts to achieve the objective.

The Third Basic Plan also states that the Government will bring forward reinforcement of regular follow-ups toward promoting the setting of a goal for the appointment of women as members of agricultural committees and as board members of agricultural cooperatives and achieving this goal and awareness-raising activities and other approaches to the communities from which the members of agricultural committees and the board members of agricultural cooperatives are elected. The Third Basic Plan also states that the Government will continue to promote the setting of a goal for the appointment of women as board members of forestry and fisheries cooperatives and women's participation in the decision-making process in land improvement districts and in community farming.

In May 2012, the Team for Promoting Women's Empowerment in the Context of International Cooperation was established under the Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality. The team has been making efforts to increase the effectiveness of the women's empowerment principles (WEPs), by means such as fostering the understanding of WEPs and expanding WEPs' signature drive to domestic companies.

## **H. Institutional Mechanism for the Advancement of Women**

Japan's national machinery to promote gender equality is described in Section 1.

### **I. Human Rights of Women**

The Cabinet Office gathers information on the handling of complaints, etc. concerning measures

for gender equality made to the Government and local governments and reports such information to the Specialist Committee on Monitoring of the Council for Gender Equality every year, in order to promote efforts for the handling of complaints concerning measures for gender equality and remedy for victims whose human rights have been infringed. Moreover, the Cabinet Office also conducts training for those in charge of handling complaints, produces and distributes handbooks on handling complaints, and places related information on its website.

The Human Rights Organs of the MOJ have established permanent or temporary counseling offices and have set up a counseling hotline specializing in women's rights called the Woman's Rights Hotline, thereby providing consultation services. The Organs try to assign female human rights volunteers or female officers of the Legal Affairs Bureaus to the hotline as counselors whenever possible, to make it easier for women in need of advice to use the services. In addition, if the Organs recognize a case suspected of falling under a human rights infringement through the aforementioned consultation services, etc., they conduct necessary investigations and take appropriate measures depending on the cases in collaboration with related organizations, such as the Spousal Violence Counseling and Support Centers and the police, thereby attempting to remedy the situation for victims and prevent human rights infringement.

The Human Rights Commission bill to establish a new human rights institution was submitted to the 181<sup>st</sup> Diet session (extraordinary Diet session) on November 9, 2012, but was scrapped due to the dissolution of the House of the Representatives on the 16th of the same month. Appropriate consideration as to what the human rights remedy system ought to be is underway, with a review of various discussions held so far.

#### **J. Women and the Media**

The Third Basic Plan provides that initiatives and challenges of media companies should be shared on occasions such as the Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality to encourage the voluntary avoidance of inappropriate expressions. Furthermore, in light of the fact that the percentage of female managers and professionals is relatively low and female participation in decision-making processes lags behind in the field of mass media, compared with other fields, their autonomous efforts to expand female participation in the process of deciding policies and future directions and their initiatives for seeking diversities, including female participation, are to be further facilitated. The Cabinet Office will also endeavor to disseminate best practices concerning

work-life balance in order to deepen the understanding of the general public.

The Cabinet Office is encouraging media companies' efforts based on their understanding of the purport of gender equality through the Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality (holding of symposiums) and special features ("TOP INTERVIEWS") of the PR magazine entitled "Gender Equality." The percentage of female staff in media companies has been on the rise, and this is expected to contribute to the promotion of gender equality in decision making in the field of mass media. As PR articles and publications prepared by the national administrative organs serve as the fundamental data for the mass media when they transmit information, the Cabinet Office is encouraging the related organs to use expressions from the perspective of gender equality in such articles and publications by taking advantage of various meetings and training sessions.

#### **K. Women and the Environment**

In order to promote education for sustainable development to build a sustainable society, which also promotes gender equality, the Action Plan for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, which was formulated with the cooperation of related ministries and agencies, was revised in June 2011. Japan will host the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development in 2014, which is the final year of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

#### **L. The Girl-Child**

##### **1. Protecting Youth from Sexual and Violent Information**

Described in D. above.

##### **2. Prevention of Child Abuse**

From the perspective of preventing child abuse and protecting children's rights and interests, the Civil Code, the Child Abuse Prevention Act and other Acts were revised in 2011. Through these revisions, it is clarified that a person who has parental authority should care for and educate the child for the child's interests, and that if improper exercise of parental authority harms a child's interest, the parental authority would be restricted or taken away. Additionally, a system to suspend parental authority was introduced to make it possible to properly restrict parental authority as

necessary. Appointing a juridical person as a guardian of a minor or appointing multiple guardians of a minor has come to be permitted, and children and guardians of a minor, etc. are now permitted to file a request for trial to seek loss of parental authority, etc. Measures were also taken to allow a superintendent of a Child Guidance Center to exercise parental authority for a foster child without a specific person with parental authority and to prevent a person with parental authority from unduly hindering protective measures, such as legal custody, taken by a facility director for the child's welfare.

## **Section 3: Data and Statistics**

### **1. Initiative under the Third Basic Plan**

Under the Third Basic Plan, the Government promotes studies concerning comprehensive basic issues for the formation of a gender-equal society, carries out a survey to objectively ascertain the current situation of men and women, and enhances the collection, compilation and provision of statistical information, including statistics on operations, in light of the necessity of studies on gender equality, and the collection, compilation and provision of related information as the means to develop basic conditions for formation of a gender-equal society. When carrying out a survey and collecting statistical information, data by gender for individuals, household members, employees, users, etc. are to be collected and publicized to the extent possible, while giving due consideration to users' requests and privacy protection.

The Master Plan concerning the Development of Official Statistics, which was decided by the Cabinet in 2014, incorporates the necessity to improve statistics by gender (gender statistics) under the Third Basic Plan. Furthermore, Japan has strengthened its efforts for raising awareness of personnel in charge of statistics concerning gender statistics through providing support to dispatch lecturers for the training on gender statistics at the United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) and also providing lectures at the Statistical Research and Training Institute of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications since FY2013.

From the minimum set of gender indicators agreed on at the UN Statistical Commission in 2013, those falling under 1 and 2 are collected and publicized in the Basic Survey on Social Life, and those falling under 3 to 10, 14, 15, 26, 28, 29, 31, and 45 to 47 in the Population Census.

### **2. Implementation of the Population Census**

The MIC conducts the Population Census once every five years for the purpose of ascertaining the status of population, etc. Collected data is tabulated by gender and age bracket as in the latest 2010 Population Census. Moreover, the ministry has been endeavoring to improve statistics on gender and age through further division of age brackets.

### **3. Collection of Data concerning Violence against Women**

With the aim of ascertaining the status of victims of violence against women for implementing

proper countermeasures and raising awareness of the issue among society, the Cabinet Office conducts the Survey on Violence between Men and Women periodically, once every three years, and tries to understand the status of women victims of violence from their spouses or partners. This survey is to be conducted also in FY2014.

#### **4. Collection of Data concerning Situations of Specific Groups of Women**

The Third Basic Plan states that efforts will be made to understand the actual conditions of cases where a woman faces multiple additional challenges due to being a woman and that necessary measures will be carried out from the perspective of gender equality as well as promoting human rights education and promotion and remedy for the victims of human rights infringement, based on the following basic direction of measures: 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, or a member of the Ainu people or Dowa group. Related ministries and agencies take the following measures not by establishing a framework of special measures for limited places of origin or nationalities but simply by reacting accordingly, depending on the individual situation and problem within a framework of general measures for human rights protection, education, employment, health and prevention of violence.

The Working Group for the Research on Living Conditions of Ainu People outside Hokkaido, established under the Council for Ainu Policy Promotion chaired by the Chief Cabinet Secretary, conducted research on the living conditions of the Ainu people who have moved outside Hokkaido, in order to consider policies necessary from the nationwide perspective to ensure that the Ainu people can autonomously live their lives and take charge of cultural promotion and tradition irrespective of where they live. The research results revealed that although the living conditions of the Ainu people outside Hokkaido and those in Hokkaido are similar, there is still a gap in terms of living standards and education compared to the general public. The Working Group compiled the results of deliberation in June 2011 and reported to the Council for Ainu Policy Promotion. After that, the Working Group for Ainu Policy Promotion was newly established in August 2011, and has been holding discussions on the development of measures from a nationwide perspective in light of the Research on Living Conditions of Ainu People outside Hokkaido.

## **Section 4: Emerging priorities**

### **1. Discussions in Japan**

As described in Section 1, under the Third Basic Plan, various initiatives have been taken over five years from 2010 to 2015. The Government is following up the progress of such initiatives under the current plan and is planning to compile problems for establishing a new plan for the following term.

For preparing this report, the Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality hosted meetings of “the Hearing,” in April and July of 2014 and exchanged opinions with intellectuals, related citizens’ groups and government officials. The outline of the emerging priorities, which were suggested at the meeting, is as shown in the Appendix.

### **2. Recent Initiatives by Japan**

Discussions held in Japan are as described in 1 above, and recent initiatives by Japan will be introduced as follows with the aim of facilitating discussions on emerging priorities for accelerating the implementation of the Beijing Declaration.

#### **(1) Promotion of Women’s Activities**

As described in Section 1 and Section 2, the Government has been promoting women’s active participation under its policy aiming to build a nation where all women can shine with self-confidence and pride in their own way of life, based on the recognition that utilization of women’s empowerment and promotion of their participation in society are indispensable to the recovery of a strong Japanese economy.

In March 2014, a meeting of the Council for Supporting Women to Shine was held for creating a nationwide movement led by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to achieve a society where women can shine and develop momentum to support women’s active participation in a society as a whole. At the meeting, with the participation of Prime Minister Abe, women who are playing active roles in various fields and leaders from various arenas who support such active women announced a declaration concerning the future initiatives.

#### **(2) Response for Disaster Prevention and Reconstruction from a Gender Equality Perspective**

The Third Basic Plan newly established “promoting gender equality in the area of regional development, disaster prevention, environment, and others” as one of the priority fields, and states that 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. Based on this, the Government took the following measures after the occurrence of the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 2011.

**a) Amendment of the Basic Disaster Management Plan, etc.**

After the Great East Japan Earthquake, the Cabinet Office amended the Basic Disaster Management Prevention Plan three times and promoted women’s participation in the operation of shelters. The Cabinet Office also clearly stipulated that efforts will be made to operate shelters with consideration of the needs of women and child-raising households and that consideration will be given to the needs of men and women in conducting commodity procurement and supply activities. With regard to measures and responses necessary from the perspective of gender equality, the Cabinet Office issued the Guidelines for Disaster Planning Response and Reconstruction from a Gender Equal Perspective, which serve as guidelines when local governments take measures during the stages of prevention, emergency measures, restoration and reconstruction, in May 2013. The Cabinet Office promotes the sharing of the guidelines with local governments and related organizations. With regard to Regional Disaster Management Councils, the Basic Act on Disaster Control Measures was revised in June 2012 to incorporate the provisions intended to encourage a variety of persons, including women, to participate in Prefectural Disaster Management Councils as members thereof. Although the rate of women in the membership of Prefectural Disaster Management Councils was 3.5% in 2011, it has been on the increase, specifically, to 4.6% in April 2012 and 10.7% in April 2013. The number of prefectures where the members of the Prefectural Disaster Management Council include no women was 12 out of 47 prefectures in 2011, but decreased to six in 2012 and to zero in 2013.

**b) Measures Taken in the Disaster Stricken Areas**

The Cabinet Office dispatched the staff members of the Gender Equality Bureau to the Government’s Local Emergency Response Headquarters in Miyagi Prefecture, and implemented gathering of local information and collaboration with gender equality centers, NPOs and others (15 persons in total for the period from March to July 2011; eight women and seven men). In addition, the Cabinet Office requested related organizations give consideration to the needs of women and

child-raising households in relation to living in evacuation centers and other places immediately after the occurrence of the disaster. Furthermore, the Cabinet Office has been implementing consultation services concerning women's various concerns and worries arising from the Great East Japan Earthquake and violence against women by telephone and through interview or other means in Iwate Prefecture, Miyagi Prefecture, and Fukushima Prefecture since FY2011, with the cooperation of consultants nationwide in collaboration with local governments, private bodies, and other organizations.

The police dispatched a special contingent to secure the safety and security of disaster victims' lives. Consultation services and crime prevention guidance was provided to disaster victims who live in evacuation centers and other sites in the disaster stricken areas. The special contingent consisted of 754 police officers (of which 492 were women) in total, dispatched from the Metropolitan Police Department and Prefectural Police Headquarters to three disaster-stricken prefectures (Iwate Prefecture, Miyagi Prefecture, and Fukushima Prefecture) over a period of 165 days in total.

The Reconstruction Agency gathers and makes public example cases where women play an active part in reconstruction and example cases of providing support for women in the disaster stricken areas, and also encourages specific efforts to be made in the disaster stricken areas from the perspective of gender equality while utilizing this collection of example cases.

With the particular perspective of giving consideration to female disaster victims, the Ministry of Defense (MOD) dispatched female self-defense officials to conduct wide-ranging operations, such as hearing requests for relief supplies that women require in a detailed manner and delivering such supplies in an appropriate manner, searching the women's dormitories of disaster stricken companies, and providing bathing services.

Female volunteer fire corps engaged in various activities, including support for evacuation of residents immediately after occurrence of the disaster, warning patrol activities, and support for evacuation centers. In addition, female fire prevention clubs (organizations consisting of women that promote prevention of fires arising from households and other local disaster prevention activities) engaged in a wide variety of activities, including support for soup kitchens in evacuation centers, distribution of relief supplies, and confirmation of information about people's well-being.

**c) Adoption of the Resolution “Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in Natural**

**Disasters” (The 56th and 58th Sessions of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women)**

At the 56th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women held in March 2012, after one year had elapsed since the Great East Japan Earthquake that hit Japan in March 2011, Japan for the first time submitted a draft resolution, entitled “Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in Natural Disasters,” aiming to share experience and lessons with other countries to deepen the understanding of the international community and at the same time to facilitate measures against disasters giving due consideration to women. The Resolution was adopted in consensus. Japan also submitted a draft resolution following up the adopted resolution at the 58th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women held in March 2014, and the resolution was adopted in consensus. The resolution Japan submitted in 2014 places stress on the significance of the creation of a disaster resilient society and women’s participation in ordinary times for that purpose, as well as on the commitment to leading such efforts to achieve various processes from 2015 onward, including the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (in Sendai) and the World Humanitarian Summit.

## **Emerging Priorities suggested at “the Hearing” hosted by the Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality**

### **[Basic Concept (Approach; Viewpoints on Addressing Issues beyond the Conventional Sector-by-Sector Strategy)]**

- Women face a variety of structural obstacles obstructing the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women, such as responsibility to provide unpaid nursing care, sexual violence, difficulty in obtaining access to resources, and insufficient participation in decision-making processes. In order to overcome these obstacles, we should therefore analyze and extrapolate proposals from the results of Japan’s ODA assistance over the last 20 years, and suggest a framework for considering the reduction of unpaid nursing care and redistribution of resources between men and women and between the public and the private sectors.
- Emerging Priorities should be discussed in relation to the Post-2015 Development Agenda to be completed by 2030. The term “inclusive” is particularly significant from the viewpoint of promoting social change focused on the elimination of disparities rather than of poverty. We should suggest using language, such as “inclusive”, that aims to bring about social change via self-analysis.
- It is important to address “natural disasters and gender/women” and “conflict and peacebuilding and gender/women.” These issues have drawn attention as urgent matters through which the situation and current issues related to the implementation of gender equality and the empowerment of women are revealed. The public has become aware that gender equality and the empowerment of women are indispensable to preventing disasters and conflicts, and to building resilient societies. We have been given the chance to share the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action with the younger generation.
- The globalization of labor and Japan’s demographic problems make it advisable for us to focus on issues related to the working environment in the context of “women and labour,” “migrant women,” and “women engaging in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, commerce, and industry.”
- We should suggest promoting the implementation of “gender mainstreaming, based on the human rights of women and girls” into the legal system, institutional mechanisms, and society as a whole.

- Efforts should be made to promote career development for women and girls. It is particularly important that lower and upper secondary and tertiary education and science education be enhanced.
- We should suggest utilizing the media and ICT and the promotion of “ICT and women in light of media and ICT depictions of women.”
- Given the experience of the Great East Japan Earthquake, Japan should clearly demonstrate a political commitment to promoting gender mainstreaming in order to achieve gender equality as the host country of the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and as the member state that submitted the resolution entitled “Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in Natural Disasters” at the 58th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women.
- We should re-confirm the correlation between the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and widely disseminate our sentiments regarding these.

**[Expansion of leaders and finding successors for promoting Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women]**

- “Roles of men and boys” should be considered as a global issue.
- Many young people are interested in obtaining knowledge and norms pertaining to global employment and in providing assistance to developing countries, but are unaware of developments in gender equality since the World Conference on Women in Beijing. They are highly likely to become new leaders through use of new tools, such as social networking services.
- The advancement of the status of women and gender equality is a human rights issue necessary to devote attention to in order to achieve social justice, and represents the only way of building a sustainable, fair society. It is important to transmit these ideas to younger generations.

**[Aging Society and Elderly Women]**

- We should suggest promoting economic empowerment of and active societal participation by elderly women.
- Responsibility to provide unpaid nursing care, problems concerning pensions and social support,

and human rights of elderly women have become global issues, including in developing countries. We should suggest a system with which to provide assistance to elderly women.

**[Women and Environment]**

- Recognizing the increasing frequency of large-scale natural disasters due to global warming, tectonic activity, etc., efforts should be made to realize the participation of women in every phase and activity, such as disaster prevention, disaster risk reduction, preparedness, response, and reconstruction.
- 2015 is the year of Beijing+20, the final year of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the year of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP21), and the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction. At these conferences, women are situated as positive actors rather than helpless, vulnerable victims. Gender equality and the empowerment of women will be indispensable in achieving sustainable development, coping with climate change, and reducing disaster risks. Sustainable development means building a disaster-resilient society in which women can choose whether to have children, and raise children, without anxiety. Efforts need to be made from this perspective. Dissemination of information about effective Japanese practices would be desirable.

**[Viewpoints of Women with Disabilities, Elderly Women and Minority Women]**

- To promote gender equality and the empowerment of women in the future, it will be indispensable to take the viewpoints of people who are apt to be socially marginalized or deprived of opportunity to demonstrate their potential ability into account.