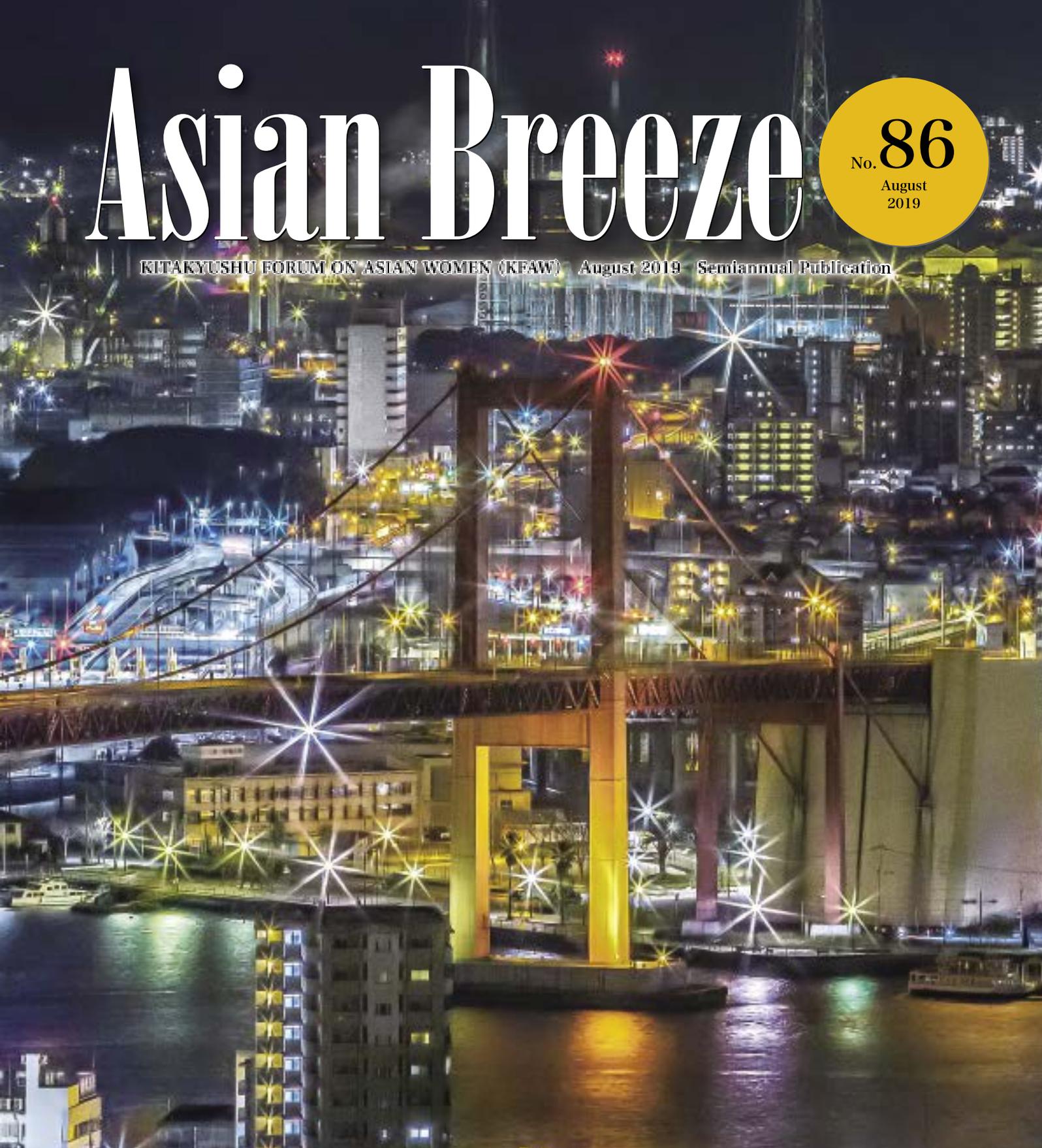


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Photo by Junji Higashi



What is Beijing+25?



President of KFAW

Mitsuko HORIUCHI

The year 2020 will be a pivotal year in gender equality and empowerment of women and girls. First of all, it will be the 25th anniversary of the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, namely Beijing+25. The First World Conference on Women took place in Mexico in 1975, the International Women's Year. We have come a long way in realizing gender equality, but we still have a long way to go. As the 2018 Global Gender Gap Report prepared by the World Economic Forum (WEF) says, "It will now take 202 years to close the economic gender gap. The gender gap in political empowerment will also be difficult to close, and now requires another 107 years to be bridged." It is true that more and further effective action must be taken. The United Nations is expected to continue to play a crucial role in gender equality. I still have a vivid memory of the Beijing Conference and its preparation. Maybe because I was a representative of the Japanese delegation to the Conference and a negotiator in its preparatory process. It was quite an interesting experience, since in 1985 at the Third World Conference on Women held in Nairobi, I was on the other side of the fence, that is, I was a staff member of the Secretariat of the Conference. Secondly, the year 2020 will also celebrate the 20th anniversary of the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution No. 1325 on women, peace and security. Thirdly, it will mark the 5th anniversary of the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in other words, the SDGs, at the UN General Assembly. This agenda is "a global blueprint for dignity, peace and prosperity for people and the planet."

Young people, including university students, may not know how passionately women around the world welcomed the Beijing conference, which was a milestone in the history of world gender equality. Civil society organizations, in particular women's groups, are also the driving force in the move to a more egalitarian society. A remarkable achievement of the Beijing conference was the use of the term "gender" for the first time in UN official documents. Until Beijing, there was women's policy targeted at women with the goal of the advancement of women, but not gender equality, although roles of men and boys were gradually considered. This position is understandable historically, because women have been largely excluded from power and decision-making processes. We women also have been suffering from discrimination. Regrettably, gender gaps remain wide in Japan. According to the WEF, Japan was ranked 110th in the world out of 149 survey countries in 2018. We must act based on the important position that the WEF indicated: "[In] the age of the

Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) ... By developing our unique traits and talents, humanity can cope with increasingly fast technological change and ensure broad-based progress for all. ... The equal contribution of women and men in this process of deep economic and societal transformation is critical. More than ever, societies cannot afford to lose out on the skills, ideas and perspectives of half of humanity to realize the promise of a more prosperous and human-centric future that well-governed innovation and technology can bring."

The United Nations has been highly influential in shaping gender equality policy at the country level, including Japan. For example, the Japanese government enacted the Equal Employment Opportunity Law Between Men and Women and other actions were taken in order to ratify the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. At present, the decrease in population has been a big factor to advance women in the economy.

Going back to the Beijing conference, the Beijing Platform for Action, which is known as a document for women's empowerment, identified 12 critical areas of concern. These are women and poverty, education and training of women, women and health, violence against women, women and armed conflict, women and the economy, women in power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, human rights of women, women and the media, women and the environment, and the girl-child.

At present, the world environment surrounding gender equality is not so positive. So I would like to conclude by citing remarks made by the UN Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, who identifies himself as a "proud feminist," at the opening of the 63rd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women: "Around the world, there is a pushback on women's rights. ... We have a fight on our hands. And it is a fight we must win – together. ... We will push back against the pushback. And we will keep pushing."

Profile

Currently holds the posts of President of the Kitakyushu Forum on Asian Women (KFAW), and Chairperson of the Stop Child Labour Network. Formerly, Director of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Office in Japan as well as the ILO Special Regional Advisor on Gender Issues (2001-2005), ILO Assistant Director-General for Asia and the Pacific (1996-2000), Minister of the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations (1993-1996) and Cabinet Counselor and Director, Office for Women's Affairs, Prime Minister's Office (1990-1993).

The Core Aspirations of SDGs and Goal 5 as its Leverage Point (Part -1)



President and CEO, SDG Partners, Inc.
Kazuo TASE

Profile 

Born in 1967. Joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan in 1992. UN Policy Division, UN Administrative Division, Personal Assistant for Mrs. Sadako Ogata as the Chair of UN Commission on Human Security. Served as Chief, Human Security Unit, OCHA between 2005 and 2014. Director at Deloitte Tohmatsu Consulting between 2014 and 2017, then founded SDG Partners, Inc. Currently the President and CEO of SDG Partners, Inc.

Almost 4 years have passed since “The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, also known as “Sustainable Development Goals”: SDGs, was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 25 September 2015. Its impact has been getting stronger and stronger both in Japan and the global society, for the governments, private enterprises and the civil society. In particular, in the context of private enterprises where I am involved in, the outstanding balance of investment for Environmental, Social, Governance: ESG investment, has shown rapid increase, reflecting the growing interests of investors in the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI). This trend offers business leaders opportunities to place sustainability in the core of their business management.

However, how many people fully understand the core aspirations of SDGs and translate them into practice? Unfortunately, while many companies have started “mapping” SDG goals to their value chains and setting key performance indicators (KPIs), their initiatives have not reached substantive understandings on the core aspiration of this international agenda.

What is the core aspiration of SDGs? Many say: (1) Universality; (2) Inclusiveness; (3) Participation; (4) Integration; and (5) Transparency and Accountability are main sustaining principles of SDGs, but I suspect that these expressions are still too difficult for ordinary people to digest. In this draft, I propose my version of SDGs core aspiration as follows, focusing not on 17 goals and 169 targets but on the resolution’s preamble and declaration stated before the goals:

“Pursuing a world where everybody can live one’s own life to the fullest and live well”

First, there is a well-known quote: “no one will be left behind,” from the second paragraph in the SDGs preamble. This idea has come from the experience in the MDGs years (2000 to 2015), where the world assumed that economic growth will eventually bring benefits to the bottom of the pyramid (trickle-down

effects). But what we witnessed was that the gap between haves and have-nots even seriously widened. From this experience, SDGs attach key importance to inclusiveness, where both the bottom of the social pyramid and social minorities should be able to participate in economy. Therefore, indeed this is one of the main characteristics in SDGs, meaning “Everybody” should be in.

At the same time, what matters most is written in the first sentence of the document, while many tend to overlook it. It states that we seek to strengthen universal peace “in larger freedom”. This term is quoted directly from the preamble of the UN Charter, and it was also used as the title of the Secretary-General’s Report in 2005, when former Secretary General Kofi Annan proposed comprehensive integration of UN initiatives. I believe that the concept of “freedom” in fact sustains the whole UN system as well as today’s international community.

How? “Freedom” means that one can do more, one can choose one’s life from a wide variety of options. Additionally, having options in our lives is nothing less than living *one’s own* life and realize one’s full potential. In short, SDGs clearly declares in the beginning of the document that we pursue a world where “everybody can live one’s own life to the fullest”.

Furthermore, paragraph 7 (Vision) says that we should aim for a world where physical, mental and social “well-being” for everybody is assured. In many Japanese documents, “well-being” tends to be translated as “happiness” or “welfare” (we do not have an exact equivalent for “well-being”), but direct translation as “living well” might be more appropriate in this context.

Now we can see what SDGs aims for: “Pursuing a world where everybody can live one’s own life to the fullest and live well.” Now I believe that the biggest leverage point to achieve this world is Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (Goal 5).

I am looking forward to explaining this in my next draft.

The 29th Kitakyushu Conference on Asian Women

The Olympic and Paralympic Games & Gender:

Connecting to the Future through the Tokyo Games

Date : Saturday, November 17, 2018, 13:00-16:00

Venue : Large Seminar Room, 5th Floor, Kitakyushu Municipal Gender Equality Center, MOVE

KFAW organized the Kitakyushu Conference on Asian Women under the theme of “The Olympic and Paralympic Games & Gender”. Ms. Kaori Yamaguchi, the keynote speaker, spoke about the history of gender equality in the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Panelists Mr. Ryusuke Tanaka (ILO Office for Japan) and Mr. Takahiro Shimojo (Executive Officer of Japan Airlines Co., Ltd.) gave presentations on the Olympic and Paralympic Games’ Sustainable Sourcing Code and actions with regard to CSR and the Olympic charter in companies, as well as the contributions of companies to sports and women’s active participation in the workplace and society. Following the presentations, the audience exchanged ideas and opinions through a Q&A session.

Keynote Speech



Ms. Kaori YAMAGUCHI

Professor, Physical Education, University of Tsukuba,
Executive Board Member, Japanese Olympic Committee (JOC)

The problems athletes face in sports can also be viewed as a microcosm of society’s problems. We have been taking action throughout the world of sports in order to create a society where women can also do what they want or to take on challenges.

Sport is one type of self-expression. This self-expression does not necessarily have to be in sports though. However, what sports demonstrate is the feeling that “you want to compete as a woman, you want to take up a challenge, you want to try something”, which is something that is specific to each individual.

This does not mean, however, that people should “give up” just because they are a woman, they are abled in different ways, or they are elderly. You may see amazing results or you may even fail. But the role of society is to provide an environment where people can both challenge themselves and be challenged.

In that sense, the message should read, “Let’s create a society where women can also try what they want to do by doing their best in sports.”

The goal is to create a society where men and women, people of all abilities, and the elderly can take up the challenge to do what they want to do. I would like us to show that at the 2020 Tokyo Games, but such messages



are still difficult to see when viewed through a global lens. As Mayor Kitahashi said earlier, Japan is considered to be behind the times. And if we’re perfectly honest, it is.

However, Japan will be able to change if it is motivated to do so. “Hey, hey, hey, I went to the Tokyo 2020 Games and something’s changed in Japan. Something’s different.” I think it would be great if people could catch a glimpse of these changes.

The Games has been officially nicknamed “Tokyo 2020”. Japan has become the host country again 50 years after it hosted the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games in 1964. I think that the Tokyo 2020 Games is a major event that is looking ahead to the next 50 or 100 years.

If the day comes when you have an idea to change yourself or take part in society in some way in your own style and not that of another person, it will be an amazing event that will make it possible to leave a wonderful legacy for the future.

Panel Discussion



<Panelists>

- Mr. Ryusuke TANAKA
(Programme Officer, UN International Labor Organization (ILO) Office for Japan)
- Mr. Takahiro SHIMOJO
(Executive Officer, Communication Division, Chairman of the Council for Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Promotion, Japan Airlines Co., Ltd.)
- Ms. Kaori YAMAGUCHI
(Professor, Physical Education, University of Tsukuba, Executive Board Member, Japanese Olympic Committee (JOC))

<Coordinator>

- Ms. Mitsuko HORIUCHI (President of KFAW)



Panelist Presentation

1

Mr. Ryusuke TANAKA

Programme Officer,
UN International Labor Organization (ILO)
Office for Japan



ILO is a specialized agency within the United Nations. We are involved in various issues related to employment and labor. ILO was established after the First World War in 1919 and marks its 100th anniversary this year.

The ILO has a “tripartite structure” that makes it a little unique. Usually, in an international organization, governmental representatives have voting powers to decide on matters. However, the ILO is an organization related to labor, and so groups of both employers and workers have the same voting rights. In the same way as the representatives of governments, both employers and workers have voting rights at the General Assembly.

The rights of workers can be protected through initiatives by companies or with the creation of systems by governments. However, it is easy to forget that it is “necessary to create more jobs to achieve the goals of sustainable development”.

I think that there are still a number of cases where Japanese companies can help create jobs overseas through supply chains, or a series of processes ranging from the production of raw materials to when a product is delivered to customers.

It is a shame that companies give priority to the economy alone and take on a form of exploitation. I think the Tokyo 2020 Games would be an excellent opportunity to secure decent work, more and better work environments, and for this, I would like the ILO to offer its assistance. If this comes out through the “2020 Legacy”, I think that the Games will become a major driving force in achieving the 2030 target.

The ILO would like to continue to take action to protect and promote the basic rights of all people involved in the 2020 Games, that is everyone, including all women, men, children and the elderly, and ensure that they have decent living and working conditions.

Panelist Presentation

2

Mr. Takahiro SHIMOJO

Executive Officer, Communication Division,
Chairman of the Council for Tokyo 2020
Olympic and Paralympic Promotion,
Japan Airlines Co., Ltd.



I am in charge of promoting the Olympic and Paralympic Games in JAL and have been appointed as the person in charge within the company to achieve the vision of the Games and comply with the basic principles of the Sustainable Sourcing Code.

Today, I would like to again look at the vision of the Games and the basic principles of the Sustainable Sourcing Code. I am convinced that what is described in the basic principles of the Sustainable Sourcing Code will actually support the sound management of the Games and play a significant role in its success.

The “JAL Vision” has three goals: “Challenge to transform JAL into a truly global airline”, “Challenge to create new values one step ahead of competitors”, and “Challenge for sustainable growth”.

The more I look at these goals, the more I think that the vision of the Games is moving in the same direction as the JAL Group, even if the way of expressing it is different.

I have realized once again that the basic principles of the Sustainable Sourcing Code (sourcing companies that are in compliance with the ILO’s core labor standards) are also important goals that we at JAL are required to work towards in our aim to realize the JAL Vision.

In other words, I have become aware again that being able to meet the requirements of the Sustainable Sourcing Code as a company is a prerequisite for us to achieve the vision of the JAL Group, or the “JAL Vision”, and is also simply a way for us to contribute to the success of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games as well.

The theme of the Games of “Connecting to Tomorrow” is accompanied by a sentence that states, “The 2020 Games will enable Japan, now a mature economy, to promote future changes throughout the world, and leave a positive legacy for future generations.”

In that sense, JAL considers the “Sustainable Sourcing Code” to be an important theme for us as well.

KFAW Thailand Study Tour 2018



A group from Kitakyushu visited Thailand, a country with strong ties to Kitakyushu, from December 11 (Tue) to 16 (Sun), 2018 to enhance their understanding of Thai society and to learn about challenges in achieving gender equality in the Asia-Pacific region. Rapid economic development in Thailand has resulted in widening income gaps and a number of slums exist in various parts of Bangkok. This report will focus mainly on the Duang Prateep Foundation, which provides support to residents in Bangkok's largest slum, Khlong Toei.



Place of visit [Theme]

December 12 (Wed)

Embassy of Japan in Thailand [Overview of Thai society]
 Duang Prateep Foundation, Khlong Toei slum
 [Thailand's widening social divide and protection of human rights]

December 13 (Thu)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) [Gender equality and women's empowerment]
 International Organization for Migration (IOM) [Human trafficking measures]

December 14 (Fri)

Women's Studies Center, Chiang Mai University [Empowerment of women in Thailand]

Ms. Prateep Ungsongtham Hata and Duang Prateep Foundation

Born in the Khlong Toei slum in 1952, Ms. Prateep Hata started to peddle goods on the street at the age of six. At age 11, she worked at a job scraping rust off of the bottom of cargo ships using a chisel. After a friend ended up in an accident, she decided that she would work to educate children living into poverty and improve the lives of residents. In 1968, at the age of 16, Ms. Prateep Hata started teaching children after opening the "One Baht a Day School" in her home. The school evolved into a public elementary school eight years after it opened and was later extended to secondary school. This year, the foundation, which was established to improve the lives of people living in slums with the award money received in recognition of these activities, ushered in the fortieth year since it first opened its doors.



Duang Prateep Foundation celebrating its 40th anniversary. Modern building equipped with air conditioning



Ms. Prateep Hata teaching reading and writing at the One Baht a Day School, later coming to be known as the "Slum Angel"

Emergence of slums

Thailand hired laborers from rural areas as it required a large amount of cheap labor to cope with the country's rapid modernization and industrialization. This

resulted in the rise of a large number of slums in Bangkok because housing measures were not taken to address the issue of affordable housing. Home to about 150,000 people, Khlong Toei is the largest slum in Bangkok.



Khlong Toei slum, 40 years ago



Visiting Khlong Toei today. Garbage could be found in puddles, but passages were paved and there were connections for electricity.

Role of Foundation and challenges

For 40 years, the Foundation has worked on a variety of projects for people living in poverty to allow them to live with dignity, building a strong community with people living in slums. However, residents in Khlong Toei, originally built on land owned by the Port Authority, are being evicted as a result of urban planning and the continued survival of the community is being called into question.



Surrounding Ms. Prateep Hata (front row, second from left)



Commemorative journal published by the Foundation

Wrap-up of the Thailand Study Tour

What we experienced on this tour is an understanding of the importance of feeling compassion for others and having the capacity to understand their suffering. Ms. Prateep Hata, herself a child of a slum, rose up to help residents and received support for the activities of the Foundation from many people who agreed with her intentions. At both the United Nations Development Programme and the International Organization for Migration, multi-national staff members are boldly taking up the issues of human

trafficking and natural disasters in both Thailand and the Asia-Pacific region and are taking great strides forward in creating a better society from a global perspective. During this study tour, we felt that the happiest and most rewarding thing for the human race would be to be able to work for others and for the sake of society. In the future, KFAW will continue to disseminate information on various issues developing in Japan and around the world to create awareness. (KFAW Secretariat)

What Lies Behind the Global Increase in Women Political Leaders? ~What changes will result from the presence of more women political leaders?



Date : Saturday, February 16, 2019, 14:00-16:00

Venue : Small Seminar Room, 5th Floor, Kitakyushu Municipal Gender Equality Center, MOVE

Lecturer : SHIN Ki-young (Associate Professor, Ochanomizu University)

What changes will we start to see as the number of women political leaders increases? With increased participation by women in political arenas, there will

be changes in both the Diet and legislation. For example, we will see changes in the political culture, such as (1) more diverse backgrounds (political interests, ages) for politicians, (2) contributions to the promotion of gender legislation (laws governing family rights and domestic violence), (3) increased budgets for childcare and daycare, (4) reduced military budgets and military acts, (5) a revitalized Diet with motions for bills and the submission of proposals by members of the Diet, and (6) a decrease in sexual harassment and closed door-style politics.

The percentage of women political leaders in Taiwan is 38%, followed by Korea at 17% and Japan at 10%. For example, Taiwan has adopted a quota system in which 50% of all proportional seats are allocated to women and six

seats are assigned to representatives from indigenous cultures. In Korea, efforts must be made to ensure that women make up 50% of proportional candidates and that they make up at least 30% of candidates nominated for local constituencies. Korea is also working to subsidize public funding for political parties to female candidates.

In other parts of the world that are making the transition to parity (equal number of men and women), provincial assemblies in France, for example, do not vote for individual candidates, but choose one pair from a list of candidates that are running in pairs of men and women. In Latin America, eight countries, including Mexico, have adopted a system where the number of male and female candidates are equal.

In May 2018, Japan also enacted the Act on Promotion of Gender Equality in the Political Field. Both women and men support the world. Let us press forward together with efforts in the field of political decision-making to quickly create a society where men and women can equally participate.

JICA Gender Mainstreaming Policies for Government Officers 2018 (the Second)



The second FY 2018 “Gender Mainstreaming Policies for Government Officers” training was held from January 10 (Thu) to February 7 (Thu) with the participation of seven representatives from seven countries—Cambodia, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan.

The purpose of this training course is for government officers to develop and implement effective plans to promote gender mainstreaming within their organizations. The training course is made up of a mix of lectures, workshops, discussions and field visits over a one-month period.

JICA accepts government officers who will be leaders in building their own countries under its training program in Japan to provide support for acquiring skills and knowledge and developing systems. This thematic-based training course is implemented with the participation of attendees from those countries requested by the Japanese organizers.

KFAW updates subsequent courses based on requests

and comments from trainees who participate in each of these trainings. The ability to understand the status of gender mainstreaming and issues in various countries leads to the development of optimal proposals as one of outputs from the training. On the first day of the course, the participants present and share the status and challenges in gender mainstreaming in each country with all attendees. The participants who visited Japan from the seven countries delivered their presentations, albeit slightly nervously, and discussed issues with other participants and expert commentators. At this presentation session, the participants were able to have a candid talk with one another and deepen their understanding even after the training period had ended.

This fiscal year, participants also participated in seminars for the public organized by KFAW, such as the “Gender in Africa” (June 29) and “International Exchange Talks” (January 27), which allowed them to interact with the public and share information through discussions.

In this way, KFAW not only implements the training course itself, but also welcomes the participants as new friends who can share information on various gender issues and take up the challenge to find solutions to problems, resulting in a meaningful and productive month in Japan.



The 30th KFAW Research Report

Date: Sunday, March 24, 2019, 13:00-16:00

Venue: Small Seminar Room, 5th Floor, Kitakyushu Municipal Gender Equality Center, MOVE

Participants: 30

At KFAW, visiting researchers conduct studies and research on various issues related to gender equality. These studies and research are intended to clarify issues in Japan by looking at global trends and perspectives to eventually contribute to the realization of gender equality in Kitakyushu City. KFAW held a briefing session on research by visiting researchers over the two year period from 2017 to 2018.

Report

1

Study on “Women’s Active Participation in the Workplace” through Teleworking



Yuto IHARA

(Visiting Researcher, Advanced Collaborative Research Organization for Smart Society, Waseda University, and others)

The introduction of teleworking is an effective option for people who are limited in terms of location and time because of child and nursing care obligations. It is both useful for promoting women’s active participation in the workplace and for men who mostly have had fixed locations and set work hours. There are significant concerns about information security with the introduction of this system, but the reality is that

even as networks are being developed and improved and documents are being digitalized, that vague sense of unease about these concerns continues to take priority.

To this end, it is important to establish, manage and improve suitable systems and processes to introduce this practice. The introduction of teleworking not only contributes to gender equality and improves work satisfaction, it is also expected to have an impact on expanding effects on human health and welfare, as well as on the creation of livable cities.

Report

2

How Does the Rise of the Early Education System in Modern China Change Families and Gender? –Focus on the Emergence of a New Paternal Image–



Kaori ISOBE

(Assistant Professor, Office of the Center for Gender and Women’s Culture in Asia, Nara Women’s University)

The Chinese government announced the decision to abolish the one-child policy on October 29, 2015, allowing all parents to have two children from January 2016. The rich, single child generation born in the 1980s and 1990s is now raising children. Early education started to spread in China, as parents found that from the start they had “only one shot at parenting” and therefore could not fail.

Fathers accepted that early education was a “positive

necessity” based on scientific knowledge and sent their kids to be educated. It is assumed that a father’s educational background is one of the major reasons for this. These new fathers have somehow survived the fierce “exam battles” that have appeared in modern-day Chinese society, and lived in the competitive environment since they were small. “Perfect fathers” have emerged among these fathers, actively committed to work (earning money), as well as housework, raising children, and education.

Report

3

Research on Mainstreaming Gender Perspectives in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): A Comparison between Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) by Japan and Other Countries



Yukiko ODA

(Vice Convener, JAWW (Japan Women’s Watch))

When looking at the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) of different countries, it is clear that the mainstreaming of gender perspectives is lagging behind. The issue is mainstreaming gender in the SDGs other than Goal 5 on “gender equality”. Countries that focus on gender issues are keen to promote women’s participation in decision making and leadership positions. Each country’s

VNR is a treasure trove of case studies. The Japanese government must show a willingness to address not only women’s active participation in the workplace and society, but also issues that throw up barriers to gender equality, such as violence and harassment against women and gender and the redistribution of unpaid work. It is also necessary to integrate gender perspectives into policies and to create indicators based on gender statistics to ensure that “no one is left behind”.

2019 International Exchange Talks on Creating the Ideal Future

This “International Understanding Seminar” invited government officials from different countries who were in Japan attending a JICA training course on gender to take part in a workshop featuring an open discussion on how different countries are working on the SDGs.

Date : Sunday, January 27, 2019 13:00-16:00

Venue : Small Seminar Room, 5th Floor, Kitakyushu Municipal Gender Equality Center, MOVE

Contents : [Part 1] · What are the SDGs? (Presentation by The University of Kitakyushu)

· Individual and country introductions (Relay talks by governmental officers)

[Part 2] · World Café on the theme: “What do you need to achieve your ideal future? Let’s think about the future in relation to the SDGs”

[Part 3] · Calligraphy performance/ema (votive wooden tablets)

Panelists : Participants in the JICA Gender Mainstreaming Policies for Government Officers 2018 (the Second) course (7 panelists from 7 countries)

JICA Philippines Program Officer Ms. Tracy Decena

Participants : 55

Part 1 Presentations by students from ESD Promotion Practical Work at The University of Kitakyushu and government officials



The local student-created group, ESD Promotion Practical Work, at The University of Kitakyushu explained about the current situation and challenges

facing the world on topics including endangered species, child poverty and child marriage in an easy-to-understand manner using quizzes. Following their talk, KFAW spoke about gender mainstreaming, the theme of the JICA training in which the government officials are participating, in relation to Goal 5 of the SDGs.

Next, the government officials introduced their countries, as follows.

- Maldives: Men are mainly working in tourism, the country’s key industry, as parents do not want their daughters to work at resorts on remote islands.
- Myanmar: The country’s 135 diverse ethnic groups live according to their own cultures and traditions.
- Dominican Republic: The country, which has been influenced by Spain, France, Africa and a variety of other cultures, has a very diverse culture of its own.
- Nepal: There are a number of Hindu festivals in Nepal, some in which only women fast and pray for longevity for men.
- Pakistan: A beautiful country with mountains over 8,000 meters, lakes and glaciers, Pakistan has five ethnic groups, many of them Muslim.
- Cambodia: People put their hands together to say hello, but the height of the hand from the forehead to the chest is determined depending on if the person is someone who commands respect, a superior, boss or friend.
- Philippines: Gender equality and women’s empowerment in the Philippines is quite advanced. Family bonds are also very strong.
- Egypt: Egyptians consider their identity as both an Arabic/Middle Eastern country and a part of the Mediterranean and African contents to be important.



Part 2 World Café

The panelists were divided into groups and a workshop was held featuring an open discussion between the participants and government officers on what actions are being taken for the SDGs in each country. Discussions



heated up with suggestions for a wide range of personal and social issues, such as substance abuse, violence in the home, global warming, child poverty, nuclear power and energy issues, child marriage, educational levels between men and wife, rape, domestic violence, unmarried status, divorce, and other issues.

Part 3 Calligraphy performance/ema (votive wooden tablets)

The participants were also treated to a calligraphy performance, a traditional part of Japanese culture. Ms. Nao Kuroi, a second year student at The University of Kitakyushu’s ESD Promote who also has experience in winning the group championship at the International High School Shodo Exhibition, wrote the word “dream” in bold, powerful strokes.

After the performance, the participants wrote their thoughts about what steps they themselves could take to create an ideal future on ema (votive wooden tablets) and attached these to the calligraphy paper. Finally, everyone took a commemorative photo with the calligraphy and tablets in the background.



KFAW hopes that through this workshop, the participants could gain some level of understanding about the SDGs and the current state of the world and its challenges. KFAW will continue to work on various activities in the future to achieve Goal 5 (Gender Equality).

A Daughter's Choice: To Marry or Stay Single?

Ms. Jeong HYOMIN (KOREA)

Is staying single a social evil?

In 2019, there is no need for people to discuss their marital status when talking with neighbors. However, even in this modern age, it is not acceptable for people to stay single and the fact that someone is not married is considered to be a social problem. Our society only talks about single people who want to get married but are still waiting to find a partner, not those who choose to stay single.

Society's belief that a person's marital status is the only way for a man or woman to achieve stability in his or her life creates a negative perception of people who choose not to marry. This begins with believing that the "normal" family is a key structure in society. In the "normal" family, men are responsible for the livelihood of families in the public domain of wage markets, and women are exclusively responsible for households and their children in the private sector of the family, and contribute to the maintenance of society through reproduction. In other words, if women and men do not meet and form a family, it will undermine the overall maintenance of society. From a society-wide perspective, this is only a negative view of single life.

Women choose not to marry, witnessing a break in the career of married women around them. This leads to a fall in birthrates, and women who elect not to marry become a less visible, less "valuable" part of society. In other words, women who do not marry threaten the hierarchy of sexuality and are blamed for hindering social maintenance through reproduction, which has been viewed as stable in the "normal" family.



Causes of non-marriage

Indeed, are women who choose not to marry irresponsible beings who are avoiding taking up their role in the traditional family order? In a survey conducted by a research firm Macromill Embrain, both men and women in their 20s said that "monetary reasons or losing their sense of self" were the biggest reasons for not marrying. However, there was a gap in the responses between the sexes. Men's responses were based on actual or perceived financial burdens, such as increasing housing prices and supporting their livelihoods, while women cited as burden of household labor, relationship with their in-laws, patriarchal gender clashes within the family, career disruption in the labor

Profile

I am studying social economy and gender research at a graduate school. My study focuses on facilitating the mapping of gender and social economy in Asia. I also study gender disagreements that occur throughout Asia, and meet and interview women who make communities. The themes of the workshops are travel and community. As a female scholar traveling around Asia, I support the society and values that women make.



market. In other words, becoming a married woman is a life of "only wife" after giving up some of the socio-economic status and relationships acquired during her single life.

These perceptions are not fiction. There is an extensive social background. The employment rate of women in Korea increased from 40.9% in 1985 to 50.2% in 2016. Their level of education and participation in economic activities also improved significantly. However, the gender gap for household labor is still vast. According to the National Statistical Office's data on daily home compatibility indicator¹ in 2016, women are still responsible for majority of household chores in double-income households, spending an average of 3 hours and 14 minutes per day on housework, while men only spending 40 minutes. Considering that women spent an average of 3 hours and 28 minutes and men spent 32 minutes on housework per day in their double-income households in 2004, the situation has been at a standstill for 10 years.

Staying single: Closeup immediate view

Choosing to remain single is an act that raises questions about traditional marriage and family systems that control the hierarchy of sexuality; an increase in the number of people who are not married is an important move that reveals 'pressure' hidden under the name of normality. However, it should not be interpreted as a social problem itself.

The reality of remaining single is not an urgent social issue. Rather, it should be recognized as a stable presence in the social system. When this perspective is possible, it can effectively resolve issues revolving around discontinuing careers or the division of household labor for married women. Denying other types of lifestyles, making the lives of married women an ideal choice for marriage and childbirth for single women means that Korean society is still under the shadow of the dictates of a "normal" family.

Freedom to choose is compulsion unless freedom to choose is guaranteed. Freedom exists when freedom not to marry is guaranteed. But there is a need for it to be guaranteed, and marriage is no longer a force and requirement for all women. Only when this 'obsession' is resolved will the pattern of women's lives be diversified.



¹ http://www.index.go.kr/potal/main/EachDtlPageDetail.do?idx_cd=3025

Daring to Be the Change

Ms. Swapna MAJUMDAR (India)

When residents of Patahi block in East Champaran district of the Indian state of Bihar see Anita Lakra, they feel reassured. They know that come rain or shine, Anita, an auxiliary nurse midwife (ANM), will come to help them. What has endeared Anita to the community is her courage to brave not just the vagaries of weather and the rugged, difficult terrain that she traverses every day for work but also the Naxals. The area is affected by internal conflict and school teachers, government functionaries and even students prefer to stay at home rather than risk confrontation with the Naxals. But Anita has never missed a day of duty. Every day she is out at 8 am on her cycle to visit the eight anganwadi centers (rural child care centres in India) under her area of work to give pregnant women tetanus shots and iron tablets. She also gives information and advice about remaining healthy and helps immunize their children.

Just as everyone knows the 42-year-old tribal health worker, Anita too knows almost every family. So, she does not hesitate even when she receives desperate calls late at night. Such is her reputation for saving lives that she has never been stopped or threatened by the Naxals so far. Her popularity among the community is so high that when she was promoted and posted to a primary health centre in another block, over 100 residents wrote a letter to the authorities to revoke her transfer. This was the first time such a demand was made. Fortunately for the community, Anita's transfer was cancelled.

But it was not always like this. When Anita first started working as an ANM, she faced some opposition from the community. It took her time to understand the work and gain the trust of the community. She also had to learn to cycle because the distance between the health centre where she has to report every day is 12 kilometers from her home and each of the eight anganwadi centers are two to three kilometers apart.

Anita has also learnt how to give injections, drips and stop the bleeding of a pregnant woman. She has even done mouth-to-mouth resuscitation of babies. Her commitment to saving lives has made her a hero in the village. Earlier, she would do deliveries at home. But now she encourages institutional deliveries. But if there is no doctor or there is an emergency, Anita assists in home births and this is also why pregnant women depend on her. In fact, the block faces irregular power supply and it was because of Anita's expertise that she was able to save both mother and child in one such emergency with the help of torch light.

One of the issues that Anita has handled sensitively is raising awareness about family planning. Talking about

Profile

I am an award-winning independent journalist based in Delhi. I write on development issues and the role of women as agents of social change. In my writings, I focus on reproductive and sexual health and rights, public health, education, the environment, sanitation, poverty and livelihoods through a gender lens. Several of my articles have been included as chapters in government publications as well as those of national and international non-governmental organizations.



contraception or advising women to plan their families is difficult in a state where women have little power of negotiation over their bodies. But Anita has adopted a good strategy. She advises pregnant women to eat nutritious food, rich in iron, so that their babies are healthy and they have safe deliveries. She tells them that this way there will be less neonatal and infant mortality and families will not need to have more children. Anita explains the advantage of having smaller but healthier families and distributes oral contraception pills. Though family sizes are still large, there is greater awareness about family planning today, she says.

This is also because she reiterates the message on the maternal and child health day at the anganwadis. When pregnant women and children come to the anganwadis on this day, she discusses their health as she administers vaccines, weighs the babies and treats them for minor ailments. This way, women do not feel shy in speaking openly about their sexual and reproductive health issues.

After attending various training sessions to upgrade her skills, Anita is now earning well and has bought her own cycle and a scooter. She has become an agent of change in the rural health scenario and has become an inspiration for girls and women in the community.



A happy mother with her healthy children thanks to ANM Anita

Travelettes of Bangladesh

Ms. Sakia HAQUE (Bangladesh)

Generally, our society simply does not allow women to go outside the house without their male counterparts. No matter how much we tried, we were never allowed to travel alone. So, I formed an organization along with my best friend to empower women through traveling. Travelettes of Bangladesh, which started on 27 November 2016, currently has 33,000 female members of different ages. The organization aims to empower women by encouraging them to leave their homes and showing them what it feels like to be independent. I would not say that I came up with a full solution. But this initiative was a start to dealing with an issue like this. Now more and more women feel liberated. More and more organizations are following in our footsteps. And the best part? These women are all different ages. It may seem like only the younger generation would be interested in an initiative like this. But no, older women are tired of being caged for so many years. They want to go outside and chase their dreams. Travelettes of Bangladesh received "Joy Bangla Youth Award 2018", an award given to the youth leaders of the country. Recently, I was invited to Malaysia to attend a conference and talk about female empowerment. Finding a solution is never an easy thing.

One issue that we are currently facing in Bangladesh is that women neglect their menstrual health. The use of sanitary pads is still not an option for many due to cost and availability or a lack of knowledge. We have been working on this issue for the past year and a half. We ride through districts around the country and talk with school-aged girls about their menstrual health, a taboo topic here.

We ride through the districts on bikes, so that they can see what a woman is capable of. I must add, this is a very rare sight in Bangladesh. We are still addressing these issues.



Our last workshop in Dhaka with 3,000 girls in attendance

Profile

I have graduated from Dhaka Medical College. I run an Organization named Travelettes of Bangladesh. Our motto is to empower women through travelling. I am the first woman to travel all across the country on a motorcycle. Our project is a nonprofit one and has been praised by many. We received the Joy Bangla Youth Award 2018, a very prestigious award around the country.



Our work is at grassroots level. I made it my mission in life to encourage school-aged girls to use sanitary pads rather than unhygienic pieces of cloth, teaching them about menstrual health and educating them about the female reproductive system, which is a taboo topic in our country. Our group has interacted with more than 40,000 girls so far.

As a doctor myself, it seems a bit easier for the girls to confide in me about their problems with menstruation. They are not allowed to talk about menstruation, even with their parents. In some places in Bangladesh, people have not even heard of sanitary pads (let alone tampons or other types of menstrual products). Education on this topic is compulsory all over the country, yet this taboo topic is ignored and neglected by the local population.

We follow up with the girls as well. We provide them with our phone numbers and they contact us to consult about any health-related issues.

We also talk with the girls about how they can defend themselves. We hold workshops in all 64 districts of Bangladesh. The number of rapes and cases of harassment are gradually increasing in the country. We realized that women should know how to defend themselves when needed, so we teach them basic life-saving skills.

We have currently finished travelling to all 64 districts in Bangladesh, earning praise from hundreds and thousands of Bangladeshis. Our work was featured in all the leading newspapers of Bangladesh, one Italian newspaper and even in the BBC World Service and BBC Breakfast.

We believe our work is not yet finished. We plan to form teams in every district that can continue our good work and make Bangladesh a better place.



We traveled together with 100 girls. As women are not allowed outside home, our initiative made girls feel confident and empowered.