

# Asian Breeze

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# Women Today

*“Violence against Women is not a private matter: it’s a public crisis that demands a public response”*

The year 2011 was a landmark year for women with the creation of UN Women to advance women’s empowerment and equality, and the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to three outstanding women leaders of peace and democracy. One of our priorities at UN Women is putting an end to the global pandemic of violence against women and girls, which persists as one of the most common and pervasive human rights violations.

Our analysis of surveys across regions shows that as many as 6 in 10 women experience physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime, mostly from men they know. The consequences and costs are devastating – not only for the fundamental rights, well-being and health of the women affected, but for their families and children, and the social and economic prosperity of communities and nations. The costs of violence against women run in the billions of dollars every year – in health, legal, police and related services, in lost wages to women and diminished female productivity to employers.

Today there is growing recognition that the heavy toll of violence against women can be reduced with the proper strategies and investments. In these times of economic crisis, it is especially important to preserve critical services for women at risk: reports show that when men’s unemployment rises, domestic abuse tends to become exacerbated.

From a global perspective, there is a sense of optimism because in recent years more and more countries have pledged their commitment to take action on gender-based violence. In November 2011, we issued a ‘16-step’ policy agenda for a comprehensive response that focuses on the three Ps: prevention, protection and the provision of services.

Prevention must be a priority, especially through educational and socialization approaches starting at an early age so that boys and girls are raised with values of equality and non-violence. The role of the mass media is essential in contributing to the transformation of social norms. Men of all ages and walks of life- from political and economic leaders, to fathers, teachers, policemen, judges and doctors, neighbors and friends, artists and celebrities –are part



Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations  
and Executive Director of UN Women

**Ms. Michelle BACHELET**

of the solution. Greater progress comes when men and women and young people join together and take a firm stand that violence against women is not an acceptable practice.

Protection is also vitally important. Impunity of perpetrators must be brought to an end through tougher enforcement of laws and improvements in women’s access to meaningful justice. And much more needs to be done, including in industrialized countries, to provide, and ensure universal access to, essential services. Every woman and girl subjected to violence, regardless of where she lives or who she is, deserves emergency and immediate support to guarantee her safety, health, human and legal rights.

In the end, the most effective way to make progress on ending violence against women is by ensuring simultaneous and mutually reinforcing investments in gender equality more broadly, especially in strategic areas that are most closely correlated as ‘protective’ factors for women against abuse and violence. These include education, especially through secondary school, reproductive health and rights, economic empowerment, and participation in decision-making, whether on corporate boards of multinational companies, at the highest levels of government, or in the household.

As UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said at the launch of his UNiTE Campaign to end violence against women in 2008: *“Violence against women is never acceptable, never excusable, never tolerable.”*

## Profile of Michelle Bachelet

Ms. Michelle Bachelet is the first Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women, which was established on 2 July 2010 by the United Nations General Assembly. Ms. Bachelet most recently served as President of Chile from 2006 to 2010. She also held ministerial portfolios in the Chilean Government as Minister of Defence and Minister of Health. As Defence Minister, Ms. Bachelet introduced gender policies intended to improve the conditions of women in the military and police forces. As Minister of Health, she implemented health care reform, improving attention to primary care facilities with the aim of ensuring better and faster health care response for families.

### Reflections on Dating DV

#### Part 3

#### What is a Healthy Dating Relationship?



**Noriko YAMAGUCHI**

A representative of Aware,  
Domestic Violence Batters' Intervention  
Program & Dating DV Prevention Program,  
Director, Facilitator, Trainer

Domestic violence (DV) derives from certain assumptions about "power and control," "toleration for violence," and "gender bias (gender distinction and difference established socially and culturally)." Dating DV, which occurs especially among young people, results from the above factors, and also largely from such young people's distorted ideas of what love and dating are supposed to be. In this regard, to ensure that they have healthy dating experience, unaffected by dating DV, it is necessary for them to check whether they espouse the above values, and if so, to unlearn them. Also, it is essential for them to consider whether what they regard as normal love and dating is really not wrong or distorted, and to learn what a healthy dating relationship is, and what should be done to establish such a relationship.

In order not to become an offender or a victim of dating DV, it is important to realize the following things:

#### **Never use violence**

Physical violence is an injurious assault regarded as a criminal act, whether the victim is the offender's partner or not. Not only committing direct violence, but also expressing anger by inappropriate actions, such as destroying things, or yelling at or ignoring one's partner, is also regarded as violence (abuse) against the partner in the form of threat and coercion. How you feel can never be made sufficiently clear to your partner, unless you express it in words. To expect your partner to know how you feel even if you do not talk about it is just an unreasonable dependence on the partner, which will end in making your partner feel uncomfortable. It is important to realize that blaming your partner for how you feel and expecting your partner to make you feel better are both just forms of dependence.

#### **Never restrain your partner**

Many young people seem to think that it is natural for a couple to restrain each other. Young couples often restrain each other through behavior connected with their mobile phones, violating personal privacy by checking their partner's mobile phone records without asking, and even deleting e-mails and addresses of people they do not like. Many young people think that these activities result from love, but this is totally untrue. It is important to realize that restricting your partner's actions just because you love your partner or just because you are a couple is the beginning of control.

#### **Respect the partner as an individual on an equal footing**

Respecting someone means trying to accept her/his ideas and values that are different from yours, even if you do not agree with them. To do this, it is imperative to listen to him/her with sympathy and try to understand him/her. When you and your partner decide something, it is necessary to compromise with each other through negotiation. These

activities can be conducted only when you fully accept your partner as an individual on an equal footing. It is important to realize that, if you think you are superior to your partner, you will regard acceptance of your partner's idea as "losing," or find compromise dissatisfying, which may lead you to committing DV.

#### **Respect "what you are"**

It is dangerous to think that partners, as a couple, should completely share their feelings and thoughts. It is natural that each of them has partner's own values and preferences. The difference between them should be accepted as it is, not as a factor indicating who is superior/inferior, or the winner/loser. The pleasure of dating comes from being stimulated by and learning from someone who has ideas, attitudes, feelings and preferences different from your own.

Also, if you restrict your partner's actions based on gender bias, expecting him/her to do "what a girlfriend/boyfriend is supposed to do," that will just result in making your partner feel cramped and uncomfortable. Moreover, it is also uncomfortable if you restrict yourself based on gender bias. It is important to respect not what you and your partner are supposed to do based on gender bias, but what you and your partner really are.

#### **Respect each other's self-determination**

It is dangerous to think that if you love your partner you must follow the partner, or that if your partner loves you then he/she must follow you. It is necessary to strike a balance between you and your partner, with neither of you obeying the other implicitly or making unreasonable endurance. All human beings have a right and capability to determine things for ourselves. The important thing is to respect each other's self-determination. Additionally, we have the right to sexual self-determination, specifically in decisions regarding sexual intercourse. It seems that many young people think that dating simply means having sexual intercourse, without realizing that such intercourse entails possibilities of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. If you really love your partner, it is natural that you should think about contraception in advance. Women should not hesitate to tell their partner what they really want to do. Women should have the courage to express themselves clearly, even if that seems difficult, without fearing that their partner may dislike them.

It is hoped that young couples can avoid dating DV, by respecting each other's decisions and feelings, refraining from restricting each other, allowing each other to do as they wish, and supporting and encouraging each other. This can result in the establishment of "a truly comfortable, close relationship."

# 22nd Kitakyushu Conference on Asian Women

On November 26 and 27, the Kitakyushu Conference on Asian Women was held at the Kitakyushu Municipal Gender Equality Center MOVE.

For details, please visit <http://www.kfaw.or.jp/report/index.html.en>

## Facing Natural Disasters

### - What We Should Learn from the Great East Japan Earthquake

On the first day, the 26th, a keynote lecture and a panel discussion were held with the theme “Facing Natural Disasters - What We Should Learn from the Great East Japan Earthquake,” inviting people engaged in reconstruction and restoration support efforts to deliver the lecture and act as panelists. The panel discussion, with a panelist invited also from Korea, featured the Great East Japan Earthquake including the necessity of a gender-equal perspective for disaster damage prevention measures as well as reconstruction and restoration efforts. Finally, what we can and should do now was examined.

#### ◆Keynote lecture: “Disasters and Gender Equality” Reiko AOKI (Executive Director of the National Council of Women's Centers, NPO)

From the perspective of gender equality, Ms. Aoki spoke about the importance of appropriate responses and support at the time of disasters and about the need for a proper disaster damage prevention plan, sharing concrete examples from the Great East Japan Earthquake.

One of the most impressive support measures offered by her organization was establishment of the website “Disasters and Women Centers.” The website enabled women's centers nationwide to exchange and share information, leading to the provision of support that was really needed in affected areas. When the operation of evacuation centers was male-oriented, the website was effective in helping to answer women's needs that tended to be overlooked. Ms. Aoki indicated the necessity of “match-making” between demands which women hesitate to express clearly and actual support; specifically, the provision of space and consultation services only for women as well as the delivery of cosmetics and other daily necessities.

Focusing on the “6.11 Symposium – Disaster/Reconstruction and Gender Equality” held in Tokyo, Ms. Aoki also referred to how the symposium's executive committee promoted reconstruction efforts after the symposium. She clearly explained how the committee urged the central government to ensure that gender-equality was incorporated in its disaster reconstruction measures. Her explanation was truly significant.



▲Keynote lecture by Ms. Aoki

#### ◆Panel discussion

##### < Panelists >

- Reiko AOKI (Executive Director, National Council of Women's Centers, NPO)
- Kyong-Ja MIN (President, Chungcheongnam-Do Women's Policy Development Institute, Korea)
- Yasuko ARAI (Subsection Chief, General Affairs & Planning, Sendai Gender Equal Opportunity Foundation)
- Kenichiro OGAWA (General Secretary, Kitakyushu YMCA)

##### < Coordinator >

- Kuniko YOSHIZAKI (President, Kitakyushu Forum on Asian Women)

At the panel discussion, each panelist made a presentation, followed by a free discussion.

First, Ms. Min, from Korea, spoke about her country's responses to earthquakes, as well as the Korean people's response to and support given in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake. While Korea has never experienced a large-scale earthquake, in recent years the country has been hit more and more frequently by earthquakes with a seismic intensity scale of under 4. Nevertheless, according to Ms. Min, the country's disaster damage prevention measures are not sufficient.

Next, Ms. Arai, who was engaged in women-friendly support in Sendai, which was hard hit by the disaster, spoke about the actual situation and challenges of the area's support efforts. She presented the details of a laundry service offered by a non-profit organization in Sendai. One of the most impressive messages in her presentation was that, when providing support, her organization always paid attention to what should be done to help affected women return to their normal lives and regain a positive attitude.

Finally, Mr. Ogawa, who served as part of the operations staff of a volunteer center in Sendai City, gave a concrete and easy-to-understand presentation on a support activity provided by his organization. The organization invited children who evacuated to a Kitakyushu City camp.

The panel discussion concluded with an exchange of opinions between Ms. Yoshizaki, the coordinator and all the panelists on significant gender-related problems observed after the disaster, including those related to employment and domestic violence against women. Some reports said that women tended to experience greater disadvantage than men at the time of



▲Panelists



natural disasters. There is no denying that this is due to the low participation of women in the decision-making process, which makes it difficult to reflect women's opinions. In this regard, it was confirmed once again that it was necessary to feature the concept of gender equality even in normal times. The program came to an end with the suggestion that in order to minimize possible disaster damage, it is necessary for everyone to work together on the problem.

## Reports on KFAW Research Activities

The Kitakyushu Forum on Asian Women (KFAW) conducts surveys and research on a wide variety of gender and women related problems across the world, especially in the Asia and the Pacific region. At the report session held on the second day, November 27, of the Kitakyushu Conference on Asian Women, Chief Researcher Masami Shinozaki and Senior Researcher Masako Ota gave presentations on their research and exchanged opinions with forum participants.

### "A Comparative Research on Effective Policies and Measures to Raise the TFR in Japan and Korea – An Interim Report"

Masami SHINOZAKI, Chief Researcher, KFAW

The TFR in Japan and Korea dropped historically low. And the female labor involvement rate in the two countries continues to show the M letter type, which is different from other OECD countries. Various policies and measures have been carried out considering these rates over two decades.

This research aims to examine the effectiveness of these policies and measures at the local government's level: prefectures, cities, townships and villages. In this interim report, Professor Bae discussed the birth rate and policies changes in Korea. Ms. Shinozaki then explained the methodological framework, and introduced the unique case of Iidate village, Fukushima, whose TFR was 1.8 during past several years. She also referred to Edogawa-ku, Tokyo and Shimane prefecture.



### "Women's Empowerment through Collective Actions: The Case of Mukhtar Federation in Andhra Pradesh, India"

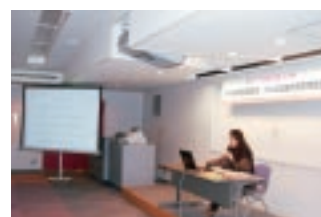
Masako OTA, Senior Researcher, KFAW

The results of research on the Mahila Samakhya Programme was reported based on fieldwork in India. The programme aims to empower women through education by adopting a problem-solving approach.

Women are organized into groups which try to remove obstacles to the promotion of female education. Thus, women and girls are enabled to avail themselves of educational opportunities.

The Makthal federation was established to solve common problems across the villages, such as child marriage and child labor. It is promoting education, redressing gender discrimination, and sending representatives to *panchayat* (self-government in villages). Also, it is now conducting projects independently from the original programme.

Concerning projects for women's empowerment, it is important to incorporate a strategy which enables women to acquire abilities and take action to change society, rather than merely providing services.



## Reports on KFAW /CWPDJ Joint Research

(4th Japan-Korea Seminar "Comparison between Japan and Korea in Child-Rearing Support Networks")

In August 2011, KFAW visited the Chungcheongnam-Do Women's Policy Development Institute (CWPDJ) to meet CWPDJ's new president Kyong-Ja Min, who assumed the position in 2010. It was confirmed at the meeting that both organizations will further engage in mutual cooperation. On the second day of the Kitakyushu Conference on Asian Women, reports on a KFAW and CWPDJ joint research project were presented for the first time in the three-year history of relations between the two organizations. Also KFAW and CWPDJ researchers explained their respective research.

The research provided a comparison between Japan and Korea in terms of each country's actual situation regarding social support networks for working women with young children to help raise their children, and how the networks for such women influenced their decision to continue to work.

It was reported that while a so-called "M-shaped curve" was observed in female labor force participation in both countries, there were differences in their working attitudes and practices in terms of social support networks. One of the most concrete and impressive examples was that working women in Korea were more satisfied with their working situation than those in Japan, and they highly valued their husbands, who provided support for their careers.

Report① "Personal network to help married women work – based on surveys in Fukuoka Prefecture (Kitakyushu City and Fukuoka City) and Korea (Chungcheongnam-Do)"  
Katsuhiko ISHIKAWA, enrolled in a doctoral program of the Graduate School of Human-Environment Studies, Kyushu University (FY 2010 KFAW Research Staff)

Report② "Surveys on the actual situation of child-rearing support networks and working attitudes – with the focus on a comparison between Korea and Japan"  
Eun Hee CHOE, researcher of the Chungcheongnam-Do Women's Policy Development Institute, Korea



After graduating from The University of Science Malaysia in the field of interior design, I started my life as a foreign student in Tokyo, Japan to continue my studies, hoping to contribute and dedicate myself to the education field in the future. I obtained my master degree in architecture and am currently a Ph.D. student in the same university, conducting research on environment-behavioral studies.



CHEOW Puei Kuen (Malaysia)

## Communications and Internet Culture

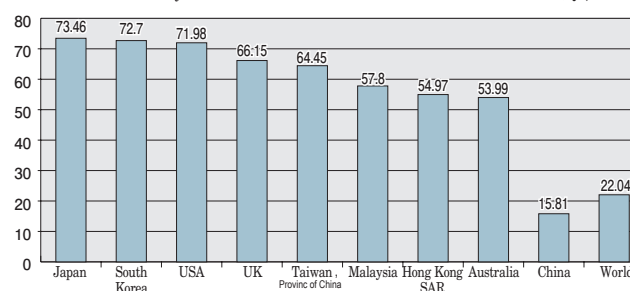
Internet connection started in 1990 and became widely used in Malaysia since 1995. According to data from the Malaysian Communication and Multimedia Commission (MCMC), Malaysia ranks as number 2 in terms of Internet penetration (per 100 inhabitants) among ASEAN countries in 2008, after Singapore. Although Internet penetration rate is still not as high as other developed countries like Japan, South Korea and the U.S., the Internet penetration rate in Malaysia is still considered acceptable compared to the world penetration rate of 22.04%. The number of Internet users is increasing yearly. According to the International Telecommunication Union, there are about 16,902,600 Internet users as of June 2009, which is 64.6% of the population in Malaysia.

The language used for communication via Internet in Malaysia is mainly in English. As a multi-racial country, multi-lingual communication is not uncommon on the Internet. With Malay Language as the Malaysia national and official language, the Chinese and Indian citizens in Malaysia sometimes use their native language, which is Mandarin and Hindu, for communication through the Internet. For the ease of typing and communication, many Internet users start to create new informal short forms and abbreviations which can only be understood among the Internet users from younger generation. Instead of words, some tend to use emoticons to express their feelings and thoughts during communication. Besides that, sentences used are usually in incorrect grammar with wrong spelling. The emergence of this Internet culture is said to be a problem among students in Malaysia which turn may affect their language proficiency.

Recently, Internet is used as a platform to spread an idea or advocate a movement. On the other hand, it is also used as a link to connect different parties at different places to work and cooperate for the same objectives. There is no doubt about the convenience brought by Internet into our daily lives. Internet also makes communication possible across long distance which helps to save a lot of time and money. Unfortunately, problems like reduced physical contacts, identity fraud and others arise. Moreover, as more and more users feel confident and safe behind computer screens, they become addicted to Internet and dependent on their virtual lives. As a result, less time is taken for face to face interactions. And there is a worry that this may affect Internet users' communication skills in reality. However, this problem is still

### Internet Users in Selected Countries

Retrieved from Malaysian Communication and Multimedia Commission (Q1, 2008)



### Internet penetration rate in selected countries.

(Source: <http://comm215.wetpaint.com/page/Malaysia+Internet+Penetration>)

not serious at the present stage. If users are educated about these issues, Internet should be a very convenient and useful tool to improve communications among people instead of becoming a hindrance. Many claim that communications through the Internet is threatening youngsters' way of making friends. Undoubtedly, many Internet users make friends in the virtual world. Also, there are worries that Internet users may get cheated due to identity fraud. However, recently, with the prevalence of online social networks that require background information with personal pictures, identity fraud is decreasing compared to the time when instant messaging was the main trend.

In my opinion, communication through Internet indeed brings a lot of conveniences into our life. From the perspective of a foreign student, it makes frequent communications possible with friends and families as it is a very cheap, easy and fast way to keep in touch with others. It is also possible to let them know about one's recent life in another country by sharing pictures online. This is especially important for the foreign students who just arrived in a foreign land without any friends to cure their loneliness. From my personal experience, communication through the Internet is also a very efficient way to contact families and friends during any emergency, like the Great East Japan Earthquake which happened March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011 in Japan when telecommunication systems were down temporarily. On the other hand, many people tend to lose contact forever with their ex-classmates after graduation. Internet enables us to know each others' latest whereabouts and recent lives. Some even use it to stay in touch with their teachers or lecturers. No matter what kind of new invention it is, more important is the way people use this invention. If people do not misuse the Internet, the benefits it brings to our lives are much more than the disadvantages.

Throughout my undergraduate years to my time as a doctoral student, I participated in programs at the National University of Singapore and conducted research on Chinese communities in Singapore.

Currently, I work for both the Department of History and Department of Japanese Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Also, I am researching the support provided in Chinese communities for children with High Functioning Pervasive Developmental Disorder.



## Trends among Young People in Hong Kong (Food)

Miho GODA (Hong Kong)

In Hong Kong, 95% of residents are ethnically Han. They speak Cantonese. And writing in kanji characters is seen almost everywhere. At the same time, the region's history as a British colony and prosperous hub port of world trade has made Hong Kong a multicultural region. Even now, it is home to many business persons from all over the world and numerous household workers from Southeast Asia. As a result, Hong Kong has a wide variety of religions and cultures. Likewise, its wide variety of food culture is not limited to Chinese cuisine. You can select from an extensive range of delicious dishes. Actually, through getting to know young people in Hong Kong, I have learned that they enjoy various types of dishes every day.

Young people in Hong Kong are always interested in things that are new and unusual. This applies also to their eating habits. Many of them are eager to try hot-topic restaurants and unusual dishes. They often exchange information on popular shops and new menu items. Hong Kong has countless restaurants where you can try ethnic dishes or unusual dishes casually, enabling many young people to easily experience a rich diversity of tastes. Popular ethnic cuisines include Japanese, Thai, Vietnamese, Korean, and Portuguese styles.

Although there is a wide variety of restaurants in Hong Kong, *cha chaan teng* (traditional cafés and small restaurants) remain highly popular. Some *cha chaan teng* are operated as franchises, and others are owner-managed. These stores are found almost everywhere: downtown as well as in business and residential areas. They open early and close late (some in downtown areas stay open around

the clock.) In addition, their prices are reasonable, making them attractive to many young customers. The reason for their popularity lies not only in their prices and convenience, but also in the “diversity” and “unusualness” of their menu items, which are unavailable in other types of restaurants. *Cha chaan teng* menus list more than 50 types of dishes in total, including ordinary snacks (Western dishes, such as sandwiches, toast, spaghetti, and pilaf), Chinese dishes (rice porridge, noodles, and rice, vegetable, meat and fish dishes), plus patisserie (egg tarts, French toast, melon-flavored buns, and rolls). Moreover, each *cha chaan teng* has its own particular menu specialties. Drinks served at *cha chaan teng* also tend to be unique. They offer not only tea and coffee, but also *yuanyang* (a mix of coffee and milk tea), cola with lemon juice, Milo, watercress-flavored honey drink, etc. While many young people began going to *cha chaan teng* in their childhood, they never tire of it. This is due to the menu dishes’ “diversity” and “unusualness.”



▲Young People Enjoy a BBQ in Hong Kong



▲Popular *cha chaan teng*

On weekends, many young people in Hong Kong have a barbecue to enjoy something unusual that they cannot experience in their daily life. Numerous barbecue sites in the suburbs draw many young people on weekends. Hong Kong also has a lot of barbecue shops, where you can purchase barbecue foodstuffs and equipment. Also, there are barbecue sections in supermarkets, indicating the vast popularity of this leisure activity. Food trends among young people in Hong Kong are deeply related to their notable fondness for “diversity” and “unusualness.”

Access the complete version on our website <http://www.kfaw.or.jp/correspondents/index.html.en>



## THE FORUM WINDOW

### Creating Business Opportunities for Women in Developing Countries by participating in the seminar "Doing Business with India"

Masako OTA, Senior Researcher, KFAW

The Seminar on India in Kitakyushu was organized by the Consulate General of India, Osaka-Kobe and City of Kitakyushu on October 18, 2011. As many as 120 participants were mostly men in business suits, which indicated the considerable interest in business and investment in India. The economy of India is rapidly growing with the GDP growth rate of 8.6% for the fiscal year of 2010.

Consul General of India, Osaka-Kobe, Mr. Vikas Swarup, who was the original author of *Slumdog Millionaire*, presented how India was attractive for Japanese business partners under the theme of "Doing Business with India." The country is politically stable; is endowed with rich natural resources; has a huge market; and accommodates a large labor force with highly skilled human resources. Many people speak English, which is the second official language, and two-hundred thousand IT personnel are produced every year.

The Government of India allocates more than one trillion dollars to the development of infrastructure in its 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (2012-2017). It plans to build the Dedicated Freight Corridor between Delhi and Mumbai, and set up a global manufacturing and trading hub alongside the corridor where plants and factories are invited from abroad. The

Indian government signed the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement with the Japanese government in February, 2011, expecting the expansion of businesses between the two countries.

While the Indian economy is growing, around 30% of the population lives below the poverty line. The India's per capita gross national income is only one-fortieth of Japan's. In order to reduce poverty, it is important to accelerate the country's economy by attracting investments and companies from abroad. And at the same time, it is essential to pay attention to the large number of poor people. Social business is a new form of businesses targeting the poor and the marginalized. Namely, businesses are developed with the aim of solving problems that these people are facing while making profits. For example, UNIQLO and the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh started procuring raw materials, manufacturing clothes and selling them within the country. They intend to create employment and raise income among the poor.

The concept of social business reflects the changing trends in development assistance — from providing services to capacity building and empowerment. Social business presents a new approach to encourage participation in economy and society and sustainable development for poor women who have tended to be considered irrelevant to doing business. It is hoped that many more companies which enter developing countries will contribute to the improvement of local people's lives, in particular those of poor women.



▲Indian women selling organic agricultural products produced by them

## Conclusion of Agreement on Exchange and Cooperation with the Incheon Development Institute (IDI)

On September 1, 2011, KFAW visited the Incheon Development Institute (IDI) (President KIM Min-Bae), and concluded the Agreement on Exchange and Cooperation to promote the establishment of a gender equal society in Kitakyushu City and Incheon Metropolitan City through interaction of the citizens of both cities and exchange of information.

IDI was established in 1996 to conduct research and surveys on a wide range of problems faced by Incheon Metropolitan City and to contribute to the establishment and implementation of the city's regional policies. As a part of the IDI, the Incheon Women's Policy Center carries out research and surveys on the development of policies and educational programs for advancing the status of women.

The concluding ceremony was followed by a discussion on the future expansion of interaction between KFAW and

IDI. KFAW proposed to IDI to promote information exchange and mutual participation in lectures, seminars and other events as well as joint development and use of programs for young people and other citizens. President Kim accepted this proposal from KFAW. It was decided that both organizations will share information on common challenges, such as declining birthrates, aging population, the advancement of women in society and multicultural attitudes in local communities. KFAW hopes that, based on the sister-city relationship between Kitakyushu City and Incheon Metropolitan City, conclusion of the agreement will lead to joint education regarding a gender-equal society and the promotion of mutual understanding among the next generation.



▲With President KIM (left)

### Location of Kitakyushu



### Kitakyushu Forum on Asian Women

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### KFAW

The Kitakyushu Forum on Asian Women (KFAW) was established in October of 1990 with a special government fund for revitalization projects. Subsequently, in 1993, the KFAW was recognized as a foundation by the Ministry of Labour (the present Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare). The purpose of the KFAW is to promote the improvement of women's status through various projects as well as their mutual understanding and cooperation in Asia.