

RECENT NWEC ACTIVITIES

Seminar for Gender Equality Officers and Women Leaders in the Asia Region, October 3(Mon.) ~7(Fri.), 2016

From October 3 to 7, the National Women's Education Center hosted the international program "2016 Seminar for Gender Equality Officers and Women Leaders in the Asia Region" under the theme "Career Development of Young Women and Girls." This year, ten women leaders who work for national machinery and NGO organizations participated in this seminar from five Asian countries (South Korea, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, the Philippines and Myanmar).

During the stay at NWEC, participants visited the Information Center for Women's Education and the Women Archives Center, and presented their country reports. They shared the latest gender equality policies and issues on support for young women in the five Asian countries.



Country report presentation

At the Saitama Prefectural Gender Equality Center (With You Saitama), participants learned about various community-based efforts to support women through diverse programs, such as a "career preparation seminar" for young women and an on-site DV seminar ("DV Demae Koza") offered through visits to local high schools.

In Japan, some young women suffer from difficulty in living, facing various problems including abuse, unexpected pregnancy and social withdrawal ("hikikomori"). Seminar participants also exchanged opinions with staff members of the NPO Group "BOND Project," which promotes the empowerment of these socially isolated women through a face-to-face approach in downtown areas and through counseling.

On the third day of this training program, participants visited the Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office to attend a lecture about the gender equality policies of the Japanese government. At Ochanomizu University, the initiatives of the Institute for Global Leadership and Kiinjuku were presented.

On the last day, seminar participants visited Tokyo Metropolitan Nogeï Agricultural High School to observe practical training of the Horticultural Science Course and observe the “graduates’ gardens” produced by third-year students of the Green Spaces Environment Course.

In the opinion exchange session following the school visit, participants joined in active discussions about the issues of secondary education compared to their home countries. After attending the closing ceremony, the participants returned to their home countries on October 8.

The outcome of this program will be published in 2017 under the title of “2016 Leader Seminar Report,” which outlines model cases of social involvement support for young women in the participating countries and Japan.



Visit to Tokyo Metropolitan Nogeï Agricultural High School

NWEC Global Seminar Promotion for Advancement of Women - Lessons from Europe, December 2(Fri.), 2016

NWEC hosted the 2016 NWEC Global Seminar under the theme of “Initiatives for Promoting Women’s Empowerment - Learning from Europe’s Experience” at Shufu Kaikan Plaza F in Tokyo, where active discussions among nearly 90 domestic and international participants took place.

The keynote speaker for Part I was Ms. Kira Appel, Chief Adviser to the Minister of the Ministry for Children, Education, and Gender Equality, Kingdom of Denmark. In a presentation titled “Gender Equality in Denmark - a Long but Rewarding Journey,” she provided a detailed report on the historical, legal and institutional initiatives in Denmark and described the political drivers and societal development necessary for ensuring equal opportunities in Denmark.



Part I Keynote Address

In the panel discussion for Part II, there were enthusiastic reports and discussions under the main theme of “Initiatives for Promoting Women’s Empowerment - Challenges for the EU and Japan.” The forward-thinking initiatives taken by EU countries to lead gender equality are highly suggestive to Japanese society, and on-going initiatives in Denmark, Poland, and Japan were discussed and shared by the panelists.

Based on her experience in working on gender equality for ten years in the Polish government, Ms. Monika Ksieniewicz explained about “Issues and Challenges to Mainstream Gender in EU countries.”

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As an expert of work life balance policies, in particular men’s way of working, child rearing, and working environment, Mr. Shingou Ikeda (Senior Researcher in the Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training), clarified the current

situation in Japan by referring to the survey results under the theme of “Challenges of Women’s Work in Japan - Toward Reform of Men’s Way of Working.” He highlighted the fact that Japanese legal policies related to men’s and women’s ways of working still tolerate long working hours, although they have aimed at a good balance between work and family since the 1980s. Mr. Ikeda explained problems facing female part-timers and the increase in the number of persons who leave their jobs for nursing care. Toward the reform of men’s and women’s ways of working, he put forward the following suggestions: ① job opportunities opened to all women; ② Men’s way of working: restructuring of attractive career models. His concluding remarks were “men for family, and women for work.”



Part II Panel Discussion

In the question and answer session, a number of questions came from the participants, and active discussions were conducted.

Issue-specific Training “Seminar on Promotion of Networking among ASEAN Countries on Anti-Trafficking in Persons”, October 24(Mon.) ~ November 4(Fri.), 2016

NWEC held the above titled seminar as a project commissioned by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Targeting people involved in combatting trafficking in persons (TIP) in ASEAN countries, to protect victims, assist their return to society, and prevent trafficking, the seminar was attended by 13 people overseeing anti-TIP measures from 6 countries: Thailand, Myanmar, and Vietnam, where JICA has been implementing this project, and the Philippines, Cambodia and Malaysia.



MHLW lecture and discussion of anti-TIP measures and initiatives to protect women

Building on the outcome of its research on TIP, NWEC has hosted this international seminar on TIP in Japan since 2009. Initially implemented specifically for Thailand, where JICA launched its project on TIP, the project later included countries in the Mekong region, then further expanded to the ASEAN region since fiscal year 2015.

The seminar is comprised of lectures on initiatives to combat TIP in Japan and the participants’ countries, policies to prevent violence against women, and public and private measures and practices, as well as opportunities for participants to exchange their views. During the orientation session on the first day, participants presented country reports on the current status of initiatives to combat TIP and challenges faced in their respective countries. They then learned about Japanese government initiatives through explanations of measures based on the Action Plan of Measures to Combat Trafficking in Persons presented by a representative of the Cabinet Secretariat, and protection programs for women from the Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare (MHLW). Participants also toured the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau, which falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice and the Women’s Consulting Center run by Tokyo Metropolitan Government. In the program held at NWEC, representatives of the Gifu police, lawyers, and citizens’

organizations delivered presentations based on actual cases. Participants then held group discussions among those involved in victim protection and those engaged in law enforcement.



Group discussion at NWEC

Participants also toured private facilities that support mothers and children who are victim of violence to become self-independent, and multi-lingual hotline organization, and visited an entertainment district in Tokyo to see firsthand the vulnerable position in which young teenagers find themselves in. A lecture on skills training programs and labor related issues presented by a lawyer was followed by workshop in which participants compared and discussed the process from protecting victims of TIP, through provision of support for their repatriation and reintegration, and punishment of the perpetrators, in each respective countries.

The outcome presentations and discussion session on the final day was held in the presence of representatives invited from concerned ministries and agencies, international organizations, embassies in Japan and non-governmental organizations. In addition to learning about the situation in each countries and differences there in, and sharing challenges and best practices, participants stated that the seminar had enabled them to look at the eradication of TIP and victim protection from different perspective, as a result deepening their mutual understanding to foster a network for cooperation in the ASEAN region.

Seminar to Promote Women’s Activities that Lead to Corporate Growth, October 18(Tue.)~19(Wed.), 2016

NWEC held the above titled seminar for leaders of corporate diversity promotion, managerial-level staff and team leaders with the aim of promoting women’s participation in companies and contributing to the formation of a gender-equal society. It was attended by more than 100 individuals from throughout Japan.

The seminar was held at the Open University of Japan’s Tokyo Bunkyo Learning Center in Tokyo on the 18th and at NWEC in Saitama on the 19th. In the keynote address held on the first day, Prof. Junya Tsutsui of Ritsumeikan University spoke on the theme “Work practices in which both men and women can thrive.” Approaching this from a social science perspective, his address touched on myriad issues such as social structures including Japanese employment practices, the importance of policy intervention as a means of determining the direction of measures to resolve problems therein, and the effectiveness of amending long working hours and increasing the quota of



Panel Discussion

limited-area employees. This was followed by a NWEC information session entitled “Insights from a survey of new employees’ perceptions,” in which the results of the first year of a panel study on new employees’ work-life balance and career development initiated in 2015 were reported. In the panel discussion, representatives from SEVEN-ELEVEN JAPAN CO.,LTD., Ricoh Company Ltd. and Calbee,Inc. reported on the acceptance of varied work patterns; measures that were proving effective at drawing out employees’ abilities; and creation of a



Group Work

conducive work climate. Addressing the importance of messages coming from top management, measures to reform both women’s participation and men’s work habits, the introduction of new flextime systems, and the role of evaluation systems, they united in stressing the importance of mutual understanding and ongoing diversity promotion. Participants were also able to exchange information among themselves and with the speakers during a social event, and build up a network of contacts across different industries.

In the group work session held on the second day, a lecture on “action learning,” a group-based method of learning designed to resolve work-related issues in a limited amount of time while developing the organization’s abilities, was followed by group work in which participants were divided into seven groups to share real-life work challenges and examine resolutions using this action learning technique.

Feedback from participants included comments such as “On the first day I acquired knowledge, and on the second day I learn a very practical technique,” “Being able to interact with participants from different industries was particularly rewarding,” and “Each company’s presentation was very practical and provided a meaningful reference.”

Training Course to Promote Gender Equality among University Personnel, November 29 (Tue.) ~30 (Wed.), 2016

The above titled training course, which targeted faculty and administrative staff concerned with gender equality, and those involved in women’s hiring, work, admission, career education and job placement in the general affairs and personnel departments or the admissions and recruitment offices at universities, junior colleges and national colleges of technology, was attended by more than 80 members of staff from universities and other tertiary education institutions nationwide.



Keynote three-way session on “Diversity and Inclusion as Management Strategies”

The first day of the seminar was held at the Open University of Japan’s Tokyo Bunkyo Learning Center in Tokyo, and the second day at NWEC in Saitama. For the three-way discussion on the theme “Diversity and Inclusion as Management Strategies” held on the first day, Prof. Kumie Inose of Konan University, Prof. Akira Wakisaka of Gakushuin University and Vice-Trustee Hiroko Tsukamura of Nagoya University send a strong message from the rostrum that reforming the way women work and participate on campus comprised a pressing issue, and their intention to make promotion of gender equality a pillar of their management strategies.

In a panel discussion on the theme “Work Climates Conducive to Women’s Participation”, four women executives and potential executives reported on the current status of their work environments and challenges for the future, and representatives from the Cabinet Office provided information on concrete ways of establishing nursery facilities within universities.

The second day comprised a special lecture entitled “The importance of gender-sensitive career support,” and working sessions in which case study reports formed the basis for discussing the importance of promoting gender equality in tertiary education institutions and major challenges. Representatives of the tertiary institutions attending this year’s seminar demonstrated a positive attitude throughout and we trust they will make use of both the insights gained and the network of counterparts they established to promote gender equality at their respective institutions.



Panel discussion “Work Climates Conducive to Women’s Participation”

Feedback from participants included comments such as “The seminar was attended by people in similar positions around the country, so I could learn a lot about various matters. I would like to take a multifaceted approach when developing systems for my university, and work on changing peoples’ perceptions.” “Promoting gender equality at universities is an issue of great interest to me as a faculty member at a women’s university engaged in nurturing the next generation of women. I learnt a lot from this seminar.” and “I got a lot of useful information from the case study reports and discussions. Being able to network with various people was also an asset.”

Renewal of NWEC’s Website

NWEC has renewed its website to offer even better access to information related to gender equality. Overhauling its design and composition has made our website easier to navigate and find the information you’re looking for. Be sure to check it out.

[Changes]

- ◇Dropdown menus from the navigation bar at the top offer direct access to the information you’re looking for.
- ◇Smartphone-compatible.

*Visit our new website at

<https://www.nwec.jp/en/index.html>

Please note that the website address has changed from “http” to “https”. Be sure to update your links and information on NWEC since you will only be automatically forwarded to a new site for a limited time.



PICKUP

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International Symposium: Gender Awareness Education for Sustainable Development, November 18, 2016

Ms. Koto Kanno, a visiting research fellow at NWEC, presented a report at an international symposium on Gender Awareness Education for Sustainable Development, held on November 18, 2016, in Seoul. The symposium was hosted by the Korean Institute for Gender Equality Promotion and Education (KIGEPE). The symposium started with an opening address by the president of KIGEPE, as well as greetings by the Korean Minister of Gender Equality and Family, and the representative of the Human Resources Development Service of Korea. They were followed by a keynote address by the EU representative and a report by an ILO gender officer.

Ms. Kanno's presentation was titled "Gender Equality in Education: Still an unaccomplished goal? Experience in Japan." In her presentation, she discussed gender equality issues in Japan, especially in higher education, and current Japanese gender equality policies. She then introduced NWEC's Summer School for High and Junior High School Girls as a concrete example of a gender equality program. More than 120 people attended the symposium and during the question and answer session, a number of questions were asked by attendees about Japanese government policies toward women, indicating strong interest in the subject.



Ms. Kanno's presentation

EDITOR'S NOTE

The National Women's Education Center (NVEC) -the Independent Administrative Institution strives towards the formation of a gender-equal society. Cooperating with organizations and institutions involved in women's education in Japan and other countries, NVEC functions as a national center for women's education to promote training opportunities for leaders in women's education and others in the field; opportunities for exchange between groups, both women's groups and family education support groups; specialized research into women's education and family education; and the collection, compilation and dissemination of information on women and the family. The NVEC Newsletter is published twice a year to introduce our activities.

NVEC Newsletter has been published since 1984. It includes information on various activities undertaken by the National Women's Education Center as well as women in Japan. The paper-based newsletter was renewed as a digital-based news source to facilitate more efficient and timely dissemination of the information.

We invite you, hereafter, to access information real time from the Center's Home Page as well as read our latest newsletter from the following pages.

- NVEC Home Page(English) <https://www.nwec.jp/en/index.html>
- NVEC Newsletter Top Page <https://www.nwec.jp/en/about/pr/newsletter.html>
- NVEC facebook <https://www.facebook.com/NWECJapan>

★ Thank you for reading NVEC Newsletter.

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