

NWEC

NEWSLETTER

Towards realizing a pioneering role and mission as a national center

This fiscal year is the first year of our Second Five-Year medium-term objectives and plan as an independent administrative institution. Our medium-term objectives are noteworthy for being mission-oriented. Accordingly, we have been organizing programs with that in mind. The Center's mission is "Promotion of gender equal education that will contribute to building a gender-equal society, and of women's education focused on the empowerment of women." To fulfill our role as a national center, we have identified concrete goals such as the improvement of the quality and capabilities of leaders of core education for women, the development and popularization of learning programs related to pressing issues concerning gender equality, women's education and family education, and a number of aspects related to matters other than programs provided by the Center such as the streamlining of operational and financial management. The Center has formulated a medium-term plan in line with these goals, but whether we can achieve these goals as we implement our programs depends on the effectiveness of our management. The challenge facing The Second Five-Year medium-term plan and objectives is whether we can successfully serve as the national center for the promotion of gender equality with

respect to women's education. In other words, the Center has to clarify its mission and distinguish itself clearly by displaying its inherent value. Accordingly, we will focus on the following points in the course of implementing our programs.



First, is to conduct seminars on women's empowerment. We will develop seminars that support competence building for core leaders in women's education, such as managerial staff of local government bodies, women's facilities and leaders of women's organizations, develop programs that respond to pressing issues, conduct pioneering seminars and promote them nationwide.

Second, and this is important as a "distinguishing feature of the Center", we must further clarify the interrelationships between the four functions of study, exchange, research, and information collection and provision. I wish to indicate clearly just how we link them to each other.

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Third, to expand our partnership and cooperation with other institutions and individuals. Cooperation and partnership with women's facilities and groups, the mass media, local communities and experts is vital.

Fourth, to expand programs that support learning. This involves both providing users with study information and increasing the number of users.

Fifth, to promote international contributions, partnerships and cooperation. We already conduct seminars — for example, for administrative staff on the Promotion of Education of Women to support their empowerment. This fiscal year, I would like to enrich and expand the program that place emphasis on support for women's empowerment, particularly in the Asia-Pacific Region. Our theme, in which we will collaborate with research institutions in various Asian countries, will be stressed on the grave international problem of human trafficking.

Sixth, is for us to promote publicity about our activities. Our information programs have been involved in constructing databases and accumulating relevant information. Publicity is a way of disseminating information. We need to communicate the results of our research in order to encourage their wider use.

And seventh, we will start to build archives on the history of women and related materials.

As an independent administrative institution in the midst of administrative reform, we find ourselves in challenging circumstances in terms of financial and human resources. I would like to make the most of our characteristics as a small-scale institution in which each member of our staff will fully utilize their abilities, participate in management and work together to implement our programs.

(Michiko KANDA, President of NWEC)

Medium-term Objectives and Plan (2006-2011) for the National Women's Education Center

Independent administrative institutions (IAIs) were established as a new form of government agency under the Japan's administrative reform plan in 2001. NWEC turned into IAI in April 2001 as the IAI system went into force. IAIs are established for securely implementing policies and measures of the government in the effective and efficient manner, by committing themselves to autonomous and more flexible operations and by improving the transparency of their organization and management to the citizens. Each IAI is presented its Medium-term objectives to be achieved during designated period by the Minister in charge of the institution.

The first Medium-term objective period of five years for NWEC started in April 2001 was ended in March 2006. Another Medium-term objective period for five years was started in this April, reflecting the result of the performance review and evaluation by the Evaluation Committee of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, which was relatively highly graded.

NWEC is currently working in line with the second Medium-term objectives (April 2006- March 2011). In the Medium-term objective the mission of NWEC is determined as "promotion of gender equal education that will contribute to building a gender-equal society, and of women's education

focused on the empowerment of women. Four main goals, namely 1) foster core leaders of education for women, 2) tackle pressing challenges in terms of realizing a gender-equal society, 3) build women's archives, and 4) support women's empowerment in the Asia-Pacific region, have been identified as matters to be prioritized during this five-year period. Medium-term Plan is prepared by the NWEC and the programs of this year are designed based on Annual Plan of 2006, which was prepared by the NWEC and submitted to the Minister, to achieve these goals. (See Fig.1)

Main Frameworks of programs in FY2006

1. Improve the quality and capacity of core leaders in women's education
2. Develop and popularize learning programs related to pressing issues related to gender equality, women's education and family education
3. Provision of information, materials and the results of research related to gender equality, women's education and family education
4. Promote international contributions, collaboration and cooperation with regard to gender equality and women's education

(Takashi SEKIGUCHI, Senior Specialist, Administration Division, NWEC)

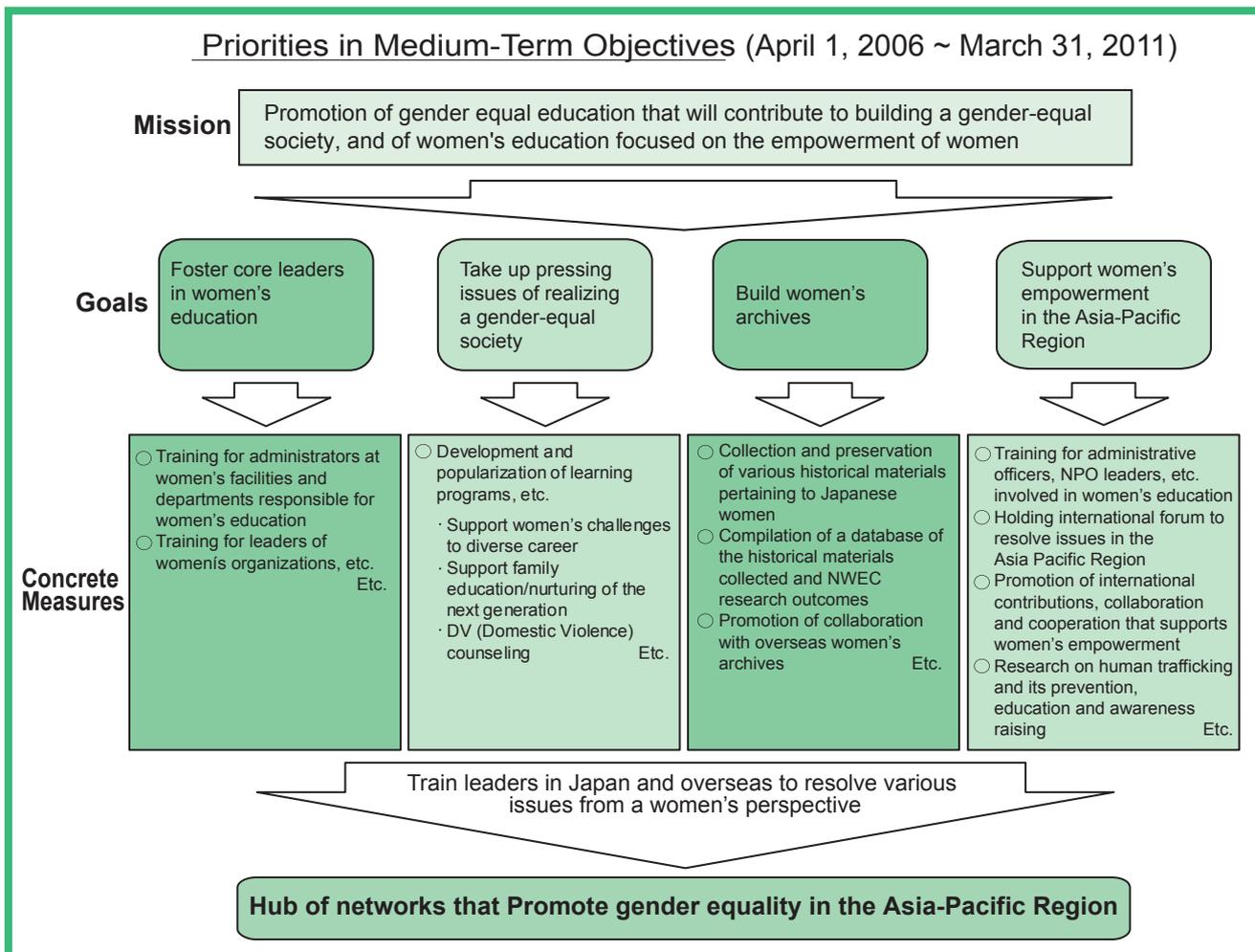


Figure 1 Matters to be prioritized during the second period for medium-term objectives

Seminar for Promotion of Education for Girls and Women



The seminar for Promotion of Education for Girls and Women was held over the approximately one-month period Thursday, February 16, 2006 through Friday, March 10. Entrusted by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), NWEC has held this seminar targeting government officers

involved in issues concerning education for girls and women in developing nations such as Africa, Asia and the Middle East annually since FY2001. Twelve trainees from twelve countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Kenya, Laos, Madagascar, Morocco, Niger, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania and Yemen) attended the FY2005 seminar.

Program Content

The objective of this seminar is to have trainees acquire an understanding of the current status of education for girls and women, and issues involved therein; receive training in measures to promote education for girls and women; and gain information and the perspective necessary to formulate and implement policy to correct gender disparities in access to and levels of achievement in education in developing countries.

The following four goals were established in line with this objective.

1. To acquire knowledge of the administration and finance of education in Japan and its chronological development.
2. To acquire the knowledge necessary to formulate education policy to promote education for girls and women and improve their own abilities.
3. To exchange information on the current status of education policy and education systems in each country and problems therein.
4. To deepen trainees' insight into and understanding of Japanese society and culture.

A diverse curriculum comprising lectures, practical training and field trips was implemented to achieve these goals.

Implementation of the main curriculum is described below.

1. Lectures



At the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, trainees were given a lecture on Gender Equality in Education in Japan and at the Cabinet Office, they were given a lecture on Steps Towards Gender Equality in Japan. Experts in various fields were invited to give lectures: Associate Professor Ota (Urban Liberal Arts, Tokyo Metropolitan University) gave a lecture on Japan's Education System and Education Policy; Associate Professor Kuroda (Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies, Waseda University) gave a lecture on Girls' Education and Economic Development; Ms. Mizuno (Junior Specialist, JICA) gave a lecture on JICA Programs and Gender Measures; Professor Kuninobu (Department of Business, Aichi Shukutoku University) gave a lecture on Accumulation of Non-formal Education in Japan; and Professor Utsumi, (Graduate School of Human Science, Osaka University) gave a lecture on The Current Status

of Girls' Education in Developing Countries. From actual schools, Mr. Yukihiro Funato, Principal of Sugaya Junior High School in Ranzan Town and Ms. Kobayashi, Principal of Otsuma Ranzan Junior & Senior High School were invited to talk about Regional Education. With regard to NWEC staff, President Kanda gave a lecture on Japan's Experience in Promoting Girls' Education and Current Challenges and various other researchers and specialists gave lectures related to their respective fields of expertise. Each lecture was accompanied by a question and answer session to supplement trainees understanding.

2. Practical Training (Lectures with Workshops and Presentations)



A workshop on Women and Health was conducted at the Japanese Organization for International Cooperation in Family Planning (Ms. Asamura, Senior Program Officer), and a workshop on Women and Literacy was held at the Asia/Pacific Cultural Center for UNESCO (Ms. Shibao, Director and Mr. Hirasawa, Programme Specialist); A workshop on career education was conducted by Mr. Fujikawa, Vice Principal of Kamiyamaguchi Junior High School in Tokorozawa and Ms. Okano, a Specialist at NWEC. Having attended a lecture and workshop on Basic Knowledge and Techniques for Presentations (Ms.



Matsumoto, Project Manager, Asia-Japan Women's Resources Center) at the beginning of the program, trainees participated in a presentation and discussion of Country Reports (Professor Otsu, Department of Education, Hokkaido University of Education), and a workshop on Action Plan Making (Professor Otsu) as a final conclusion to the training program. Practical sessions were extremely lively as the trainees actively engaged in them all.

3. Visits



This fiscal year, trainees deepened their insight into schools in Japan through visits to Shinjuku

Municipal Ichigaya Elementary School, Otsuma Ranzan Junior and Senior High School and Hiroshima Municipal Toyama Elementary and Junior High School, three schools differing in type, management format, region and size. Trainees also visited the Center for the Advancement of Working Women and the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. During their stay at the Center, trainees were also afforded opportunities to experience Japanese culture through the tea ceremony, kimono wearing and home visits.

Conclusion

This seminar enabled trainees to gain an understanding of the current status of education for girls and women and challenges therein, and acquire information and the necessary perspectives to formulate and implement measures to promote education for girls and women. I sincerely hope the trainees will make use of what they learnt at this seminar in Japan in their daily activities, and contribute significantly to the promotion of education for girls' and women in their respective countries.

(Soichi SUMIYOSHI, Chief of International Affairs Unit, Office of Research and International Affairs, NWEC)

SURVEY REPORT

International Comparative Research on Home Education

The National Women's Education Center conducted an International Comparative Research on Home Education in line with a two-year plan for FY 2004~2005 with the aim of clarifying characteristics and issues in home education in Japan by surveying changes in families and households, the current status of home education and parents' attitudes both in Japan and a number of other countries. The survey targeted parents of children aged 0~12 in Japan, Korea, Thailand, USA, France and Sweden (approximately 1000 samples in each country). Questions addressed issues such as the parents and children's daily lives, discipline and parents' expectations of their children, child raising concerns, and the balance between parents' family and work lives. This study is the second of its kind, following one conducted by the Japan Association for Women's Social Education (Currently the Japan Association for Women's Education) at the request of the Ministry of

Education (of the time) in FY1993~1994, and clarifies characteristics in home education and child raising in Japan today through international and interannual comparisons. The outline of the results of this research is as follows.

1 Japanese fathers spend little time with their children, and they concern about that.

The average amount of time Japanese fathers spend with their children on weekdays is 3.1 hours per day. Although this is longer than the 2.8 hours in Korea, it is shorter than the 5.9 hours in Thailand, 4.6 hours in Sweden and 4.6 hours in USA. Moreover, it is slightly less than the 3.3 hours noted in the previous survey which was the shortest among the countries compared. On the other hand, at 7.6 hours, the amount of time Japanese mothers spend with their children is the longest, and as a result, the difference between the amount of time mothers and fathers

spend with their children is the biggest. The tendency for preparation of meals, discipline and attendance of parents' meeting to be left to mothers is also visible. In particular, the 10.1% of fathers who prepare meals in Japan is noticeably lower than the 45.6% in Sweden, 34.8% in USA, 27.6% in Thailand and 27.0% in France, and is less than half that of Korea's 20.4%, the second lowest after Japan.

However, Japanese fathers do not think favorably of this situation. Looking at the category comprising questions regarding child raising concerns reveals that 40% of fathers responded "I don't spend enough time with my child." The percentage citing this concern increased from 27.6% ten years ago to 41.3%.

2 Japanese parents have less and less experience of taking care of children before becoming parents

With regard to experience or learning about becoming a parent, the average number of categories responded to and the percentages for each response in each country were less than that of the previous survey, which suggests that people with less experience or learning are becoming parents. This tendency is particularly strong in Japan and Korea where people have little experience caring for children prior to becoming parents and a tendency to rely on books has been observed. For example, the response ratio for "Took care of a small/younger brother and/or sister" was 18.2% in Japan, and although this was more than the 4.9% in Korea, it was less than the 32.4% in Thailand, 36.0% in USA, 28.1% in France and 31.7% in Sweden, and it was 5.4 points lower than ten years previous. At 1.4%, parents had virtually no baby sitting experience. This indicates that Japanese people grow up and become parents without having experiences of looking after small children in their own families or otherwise. Comparing mothers and

fathers, the percentage of mothers in each country with experience or learning was higher than that of fathers, and more than half of fathers in Japan, Korea and France responded "Had never really learned or had any experience."

3 "I worry for my child's safety" comprises the biggest child raising concern, and needs in terms of child raising support are growing

"I worry for my child's safety" was the most frequently cited child raising concern in Japan, Thailand, USA and France, and the percentage for Japan rose from 33.8% in the previous study to 46.9%. "I don't spend enough time with my child" was the second most frequently cited concern followed by "Education expenses cost too much". "Education expenses cost too much" was the most frequently cited concern in Korea, and "I don't spend enough time with my child" was the most frequently cited concern in Sweden.

In the midst of this, as with the previous survey, "Places where child and friends can play freely" was the most frequently cited aspect of child raising environment parents in Japan, Korea and USA wanted improved. As with the previous study, this was followed by "Financial aid for raising and educating children" in Japan, but the corresponding percentage rose from 31.0% to 48.5%. Moreover, "Facilities where I can feel comfortable leaving my child" rose from 22.6% to 38.0%, "A working environment that allows parents to spend ample time involved in child-rearing" from 29.4% to 32.3% and "A system of parental leave available to either parent" from 18.7% to 25.5%, indicating demand for an environment conducive to balancing work and child raising. (Hiroe NAKANO, Director and Senior Researcher, Office of Research and International Affairs, NWEC)

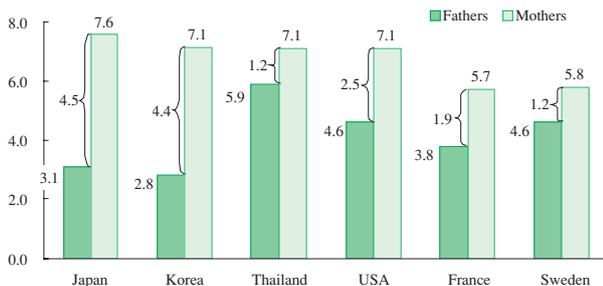


Fig.1 Amount of Time Spent with Children (2005) (Avg.; Unit: Hours)

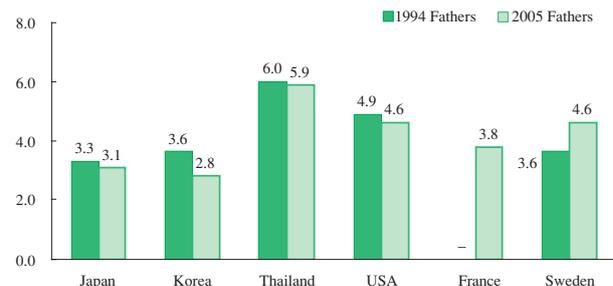


Fig.2 Interannual Comparison: Amount. of Time Fathers and Children Spent Together (Avg.; Unit: Hours)

WOMEN'S CENTER IN JAPAN

Sendai City Gender Equality Promotion Center L-Park Sendai & L-Sora Sendai

In this section, we use a Q&A format to introduce information received by actually visiting a women's facility and interviewing staff there. In this issue, we introduce L-Park Sendai and L-Sora Sendai of the Sendai City Gender Equality Promotion Center in the Tohoku Area.

NWEC (hereinafter referred to as "*N*"): Good afternoon. I have come to interview you about the Sendai City Gender Equality Promotion Center. Thank you so much for your time.

L-Sora Sendai (hereinafter referred to as "*L*"): Hello. Welcome to L-Sora!

N: Well, the first thing I would like to ask you about is the fact that the Sendai City Gender Equality Promotion Center comprises two organizations, L-Sora Sendai and L-Park Sendai.

L: That's right. L-Sora was established three years ago, but L-Park has a history of approximately twenty years including the time it functioned as the Women's Culture Center. Since 1987, it has played an important role as a hub for gender equality, predominantly by supporting civic activities in Sendai.

N: I see. So how do these two organizations go about dividing roles? I believe it's quite unusual for a women's facility to comprise two separate organizations...

L: Simply put, L-Sora mainly handles information provision and counseling, and L-Park focuses on supporting civic activities. L-Sora takes advantage of

its location in front of the station to hold specialized courses that attract participants from outlying areas. L-Park, on the other hand, has a hall and bigger training facilities than L-Sora, and conducts events and training courses that are larger in scale. Not only do these two organizations divide roles, they also create a flow of women circulating between the two which has a synergetic effect.

N: In concrete terms, what kind of flow are you referring to?

L: Should a member of the public using the library lounge at L-Sora inadvertently come across the activities of an NPO and begin thinking they might like to get involved, the first thing we would do is introduce them to the Civic Activity Space at L-Park. The Civic Activity Space, which was established to support various civic activities addressing gender equality, is managed by an NPO known as Equal Net Sendai and is actively used by a large number of citizens, and exchange between similar groups flourishes. On the other hand, L-Sora has offices for rent by fledgling NPOs, and has become a hub for developing the activities of NPOs nurtured in the Activity Space.

N: I see. So, what you're saying is that activities develop as they move from L-Sora to L-Park and then back from L-Park to L-Sora.

L: That's right. In the absence of either of these organizations, our ability to promote women's empowerment would dwindle.

N: In other words, the Sendai Gender Equality Promotion



Center is actually a combination of two organizations, both of which could be described as being indispensable to citizens in terms of promoting gender quality.

L: Exactly.

N: Next, I would like to ask you about the programs you conduct here. You have a course entitled “Power Up Course for Professional Caregivers.” This appears to be a specialized course for a very particular target. What made you start this course?

L: About three years ago, an NPO called Group Yuu, which provides services such as a well-balanced meals delivery service and a home helper service, mentioned that a few home helpers had told them that they weren’t particularly good at preparing meals. Wishing to share with citizens some of the know-how they had acquired through their activities, they approached us with the idea of collaborating with the Center to hold a course for home helpers.

N: I see. So the NPO approached you. Could you tell me something about the content of that course?

L: Courses hereto have focused on teaching home helpers cooking skills, but for the next course, in consideration of revisions to the Nursing Care Insurance System, we have added topics such as understanding people with disabilities and work ethics to the original curriculum, and the content now aims to foster home helpers with a wide array of care giving abilities and a high level of professionalism.

N: What kind of effects has this course had?

L: Of course individual home helpers have been able to improve their skills, but I think they have also managed to build a network of home helpers that extends beyond the confines of their own workplaces.

N: Are there any problems or issues to be addressed in the future?

L: Let’s see... I think we need to do something about the timing and the way we go about publicizing the course to enable nursing insurance businesses to make effective use of it in their plans for home helper training. We are also thinking about incorporating some public lectures in a way that enables us to provide information to citizens aspiring to become home helpers. The course was initiated after we were approached by an NPO, but the NPO will now have to undertake its planning and organization on their own, based on an overall evaluation of courses held over these three years.

N: So, not only have course participants been empowered by taking the course, but the planners/organizers of the course have also developed and taken flight.

L: That’s right. And the Center also wants to develop alongside the NPOs and citizens.



N: Finally, could you tell me what the Sendai Gender Equality Promotion Center intends to focus on in the future?

L: Partnership with private business. Partnerships with NPOs are flourishing; we have been co-sponsoring courses and supporting activities for some time, but we would like to engage more actively in partnerships not only with NPOs but also with businesses in Sendai. We are actually in the process of starting up a program in collaboration with businesses and the Sendai City Industrial Promotion Organization.

N: That’s wonderful. Although it is often said that it is extremely important to change working people’s, including men’s perspectives and the way they work in order to realize a gender-equal society, it seems that the measures being taken by the Sendai Gender Equality Promotion Center to promote partnership with business are likely to be both pioneering and inspiring! We wish you all the best with the development of your activities. Thank you so much for your cooperation today.

General Information

The Sendai City Gender Equality Promotion Center, L-Park Sendai and L-Sora Sendai opened in 2003. (L-Park Sendai opened in 1987 as the Women’s Culture Center.) 38 administrative staff. Program Outline: Independent Programs (•Research • PR & Awareness Raising •Information Provision •Exchange •Study & Training •Education & Support • Management of a Support Association) Appointed Programs: (•Information •Counseling •Support for Citizens’ Activities) *The Library Lounge houses approximately 15,000 books.

(Kuniko YAMASHITA, Staff of Planning Unit, Administration Division, NWEC)

PUBLICATIONS

1000 Peace Women Across the Globe

(Published by the Association 1000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize 2005)

1000 women call for reconciliation, transform conflict, risk their lives for their community, educate, advocate for the poor, stand up for human rights, create alternative incomes, care for and reintegrate HIV/aids affected persons, restore justice, fight for access to land, ask for political rights, and find solutions against violence. Coming from more than 150 different countries, they are all led by imagination, confidence and unfaltering optimism and were nominated for the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize.

* Six Japanese Women were nominated. (Yuki Ando, Katsuko Nomura, Yukika Sohma, Siin-Do Song, Suzuyo Takazato, and Kumiko Yokoi)



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Global Culture of Peace

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<Extract from the book cover>

JAPANESE WOMEN

Emerging from Subsistence, 1868-1945

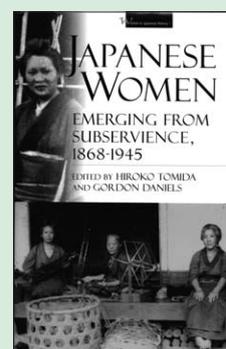
(Edited by Hiroko Tomida and Gordon Daniels, Global Oriental, 2005)

For the first time, many of the world's leading scholars in the field of Japanese women's history met in Edinburgh in 2003 and presented papers addressing the themes of 'Pioneering Women in Japan' and 'General Issues in Japanese Women's History'. This volume, containing most of the papers, which have been

specially edited and revised for publication, together with an in-depth contextual Introduction by Dr Hiroko Tomida and Dr Gordon Daniels, is outcome.

By definition, therefore, the volume contains some of the most recent findings in this field in Japan, Australia, the United States and UK, and introduces new approaches to studying Japanese women's history. In addition, it contains a special contribution on Ichikawa Fusae by Professor Molony.

<Extract from the end-paper>



Introducing NWEC

FY2006 Training for Leaders of Child Raising and Family Life Support Holding of the Training Seminar for Leaders of Child Raising and Family Life

A Training Seminar for Leaders of Child Raising and Family Life was held on Saturday, May 27th and Sunday, May 28th with the participation of a total of 121 administrative officers responsible for family education and support for child raising, leaders from NPOs and other organizations, and company employees in charge of support for child raising from 31 prefectures and 6 designated cities from Hokkaido to Okinawa.

On the first day, officials from related ministries explained the current situation and the latest policy and measures in terms of support for family education and child raising in Japan and overseas and measures being taken to address issues therein from the perspective of gender equality. This was followed by a workshop in which data from the International Comparative Research on Home Education conducted by the NWEC in FY2004-2005 was analyzed by attribute and year. Participants discussed circumstances comprising the background to these results, and deepened their understanding of the significance and role of grasping local circumstances.



“Explanation of measures being taken by related ministries”

At the workshops held on the second day, four themes were identified from concrete actions concerning child raising: improving children’s lifestyle rhythm; integrating child raising support systems; securing children’s safety and peace of mind; and support for the harmonization of work and child raising, and the goals of measures and the process of promoting collaboration were discussed. Reports on the “Early to Bed, Early to Rise, Eat Breakfast” movement being promoted from this fiscal year and pioneering measures related to each theme, lectures on these topics, information exchange among participants, and the workshops provided ample opportunity for discussion of concrete measures and information useful as a reference when implementing future measures in each community.

Child care services for school-aged children were provided to enable participants to take part in the training seminar with peace of mind and afford children enriching nature-based life experiences. Despite a light drizzle, the children enjoyed activities such as baking bread over a campfire, boiling water and making bamboo chopsticks under the guidance of volunteers from the Saitama Greenery Trust and officials from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. “It’s great to see children learning useful things” commented delighted seminar participants.

(Toshiyuki YAMAKAWA, Specialist, Program Division, NWEC)

Training to promote Gender Equality for Leaders of Women’s Facilities and women’s groups and organizations

A new program entitled Gender Equality Training Leaders of Women’s Facilities was held over the two nights/three days Wednesday, June 14 through Friday, June 16. With the participation of 62

managerial-level staff such as directors of women’s facilities on the Course for Managerial Staff and 62 leaders of women’s groups and organizations on the Course for Group Leaders, practical training was conducted with the aim of improving the quality and capabilities of leaders of core education for women who promote women’s education and gender equality in their communities.

On the Course for Managerial Staff, measures to resolve various issues such as handling of the introduction of a designated manager system in women’s facilities that promote gender equality and evaluation thereof, and collaboration with other institutes and organizations were deliberated. On the Course for the Group Leaders, management aimed at jump-starting and invigorating activities, and the qualities required of leaders were discussed.

Opinions noted in the questionnaire collected after the seminar included “Seminar content was in keeping with the times so I could participate with interest and concern.” “It was stimulating to have a multitude of issues raised and it made me aware of my responsibility to press ahead and improve things to make our women’s center a useful entity.” “Listening to lecturers well-versed on the themes was very informing.”

(Hiroko OKANO, Specialist, Program Division, NWEC)

Dr. Sobritchea gives a lecture to NWEC staffs

On Thursday, May 18, Dr. Carolyn I. Sobritchea, Director of the University Center for Women’s Studies, University of Philippines and a Visiting Professor at the Institute for Gender Studies, Ochanomizu University, gave a lecture to NWEC staffs. Commissioned by the government and international institutions, the aforementioned University Center for Women’s Studies conducts nationwide surveys in the Philippines on topics such as violence against women and has been conducting training programs for government officials and NGO leaders on a nationwide scale; it has also been cooperating with the Center’s ongoing Research on Human Trafficking and its Prevention, Education and Awareness Raising. On the day, Dr. Sobritchea’s lecture on the theme of Education and Training Towards Improving the Status of Filipino Women covered aspects such as (1) The Philippines; (2) Education in the Philippines; (3) Women’s policy in the Philippines; (4) National and regional level training programs for civil servants; and (5) Training programs for women leaders in the community. More than twenty staff participating in the training enthusiastically



asked question about reproductive policies and the literacy rate in the Philippines, methods for developing programs at the University Center for Women's Studies, numerical goal setting and evaluation system. Training proved to be extremely meaningful for NWEC staff. The University Center for Women's Studies later donated "Review of Women's Studies" and "Women's role in Philippines story", which is now available for perusal in the Information Center for Women's Education.

(Miho WATANABE, Researcher, Office of Research and International Affairs, NWEC)

Introduction to Our Overseas Visitors

Four visitors, two from Egypt and the U.A.E. respectively, visited the NWEC from Thursday, March 16 through Saturday 18, 2006 as part of the Japan Foundation Group Tour Program 2006 for Community Leaders and Youth Exchange from the Middle East (Invitation). The aim of this Japan Foundation program was to invite individuals involved in fostering leaders involved in promoting women's participation in society and exchange among youth who will shoulder the next generation to engage in information and opinion exchange with individuals involved in similar activities in Japan as follow up to the Tour Program 2006 for Community Leaders and Youth Exchange from the Middle East (Dispatch). In addition to making its accommodation and training facilities available, the NWEC introduced its programs and provided a lecture on women's facilities in Japan. Moreover, with the cooperation of the volunteers, the NWEC offered the visitors Japanese cultural experiences in the form of the tea ceremony and flower arrangement. The NWEC aspires to contribute further to international exchange by making its facilities available in this way.

Conclusion of Agreement on Exchange and Cooperation with Korean Institute for Gender Equality Promotion and Education

An agreement regarding exchange and cooperation was concluded with the Korean Institute for Gender Equality Promotion and Education (President: Dr. Jae-In Kim) on Wednesday, April 26. This was the first time NWEC has concluded an agreement with an overseas institution. The conclusion ceremony, which was held at the Korean Institute for Gender Equality Promotion and Education in Seoul, Korea, was presided over by Dr. Hyunjoo Song, professor at the Institute. An opening address by Dr. Kim outlining the Institute's mission and its expectations of the agreement was followed by an address by President Kanda expressing NWEC's desire to use the opportunity afforded by conclusion of the agreement to further develop mutual exchange and cooperation based on activities engaged in by the two institutions hereto. Following a congratulatory speech by honorary guest Mr. Bong Hyup Chung, Assistant Minister at the Headquarters for Women's Policy, Ministry of Gender Equality & Family, President Kanda and President Kim signed the agreement.

Based on this agreement, NWEC and the Korean Institute for Gender Equality Promotion and Education intend to further deepen program and human exchange in areas such as gender equality education, joint comparative research and information exchange, and cooperate in holding international seminars and so forth.

During their visit to Korea, the NWEC delegation visited Korean Women's Development Institute in Seoul where they met the President, Dr. Myung-Sun Suh, and other members of staff, and discussed the



President Kanda (left), President Kim (right) signing the agreement (Professor Song (center))



Exchanging the treaty: From right, Assistant Minister Chung, President Kim, President Kanda and Vice President Ueda

conclusion of the agreement and how they should go about exchange and cooperation in the future. The delegation also visited GYEONGGI Women's Development Center (Director: Ms. Jung-Ah Cho) in Yongin city, Gyeonggi-do, and Seoul Women's Plaza (President: Ms. Hyun-Kyung Park) in Seoul, representative regional women's education facilities engaging in distinctive activities in Korea. The delegation met with the presidents and staff of the respective institutions who provided them with an outline of their programs before showing them around their facilities and engaging in meaningful discussion regarding measures towards the formation of a gender-equal society.

(Soichi SUMIYOSHI, Chief of International Affairs Unit, Office of Research and International Affairs, NWEC)

INFORMATION

NWEC will host a seminar and an international forum and participants will be needed. If you are interested in this seminar and forum, please contact to us.

• **Empowerment Seminar for Women Leaders in the Asia Pacific Region**

Date: Thu. November 23rd~Sun. December 3rd, 2006
Venue: National Women's Education Center, Japan

• **International Forum for Women's Empowerment**

Details to be announced soon. Please e-mail your request for the application form to the contact below.

e-mail: rese@nwec.jp

address: Office of Research and International Affairs
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Thank you very much for regularly reading this Newsletter. Please send us your comments and opinions to the contact below.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

The Independent Administrative Institution-the National Women's Education Center (NWEC) strives towards the formation of a gender-equal society. Cooperating with organizations and institutions involved in women's education in Japan and other countries, NWEC 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 NWEC Newsletter is published twice a year to introduce our activities.

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