



The FrontieR



PROFESSIONAL EDITION, OCTOBER 2018

Gender Issues Take Center Stage

December 17, 2017, OCHANOMIZU UNIVERSITY—Four companies, (4her, One Colors, FW2 and Aoisora Shiroikumo) came together at Ochanomizu University's great hall to hold an event to raise gender awareness. The companies, founded by students of the International Cooperation and Gender Course at Ochanomizu University Senior High School, held a workshop and movie screening and set up "shops," the proceeds of which were donated to charity organizations.

The event was realized as part of the entrepreneurial experience program of the Tokyo Stock Exchange, a program aiming to nurture "the power to live" through the experience of founding and managing a model company. The program enabled the young founders to learn about gender issues, research how they can improve the situation of women in terms of labor and the economy—not only in Japan, but also in the world—and find companies to solve gender issues as their conclusions.

Becoming the center of the project, 4her Corp. showed "Girl Rising," a movie produced



Photo by Arisa Yoshiuchi

Students sell handmade chalk to event participants.

by Plan International Japan. Based on true stories, the highly internationally regarded film gives a detailed account of the severe situation girls face, and the possibilities they could have had in the future.

After the screening, the students and audience had a discussion on gender issues with Professor Junko Sano of the Institute of Gender Studies at Ochanomizu University.

4her also collaborated with TRAYCLE Market & Coffee, selling cookies made from fair-trade ingredients, and fair-trade drip coffee with a label specially designed for the occasion. (Photo 1)

One Colors Corp. held a workshop about the LGBT com-

munity. Participants enjoyed discussions and roleplaying, and had a chance to learn about issues the community faces. In addition, they sold postcards and biscotti with a wish to build a society where all personalities are respected. (Photo 2)

FW2 (For Working Women) Corp. made leaflets and sold candies not only at the event, but also at three major companies in Tokyo in an effort to contribute to a workable society for both men and women. (Photo 3)

Aoisora Shiroikumo Corp. sold handmade chalk using stubbed chalk laying around at schools along with pamphlets about the importance of equal education in developing countries. (Photo 4)



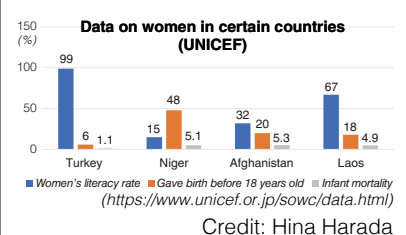
By Hina Harada, Rei Ogawa, Kokoro Sakaguchi, Yuri Suganuma, Natsumi Tamino and Moeka Tokita

What is gender?

Gender is a difference in social roles between men and women based on the ideology that men are to work and women are to stay at home. The word gender itself does not have negative meanings, but many issues currently surround it.

In the world, one in three girls do not receive enough education. Also, countless numbers of girls in developing countries are forced to marry and deliver a child before their bodies are sufficiently developed to do so. Even in Japan, a majority of women are heavily burdened with the duty to raise children, making a highly disproportionate number of women take parental leave compared to men.

Considering these pending problems, the United Nations has recognized gender equality in 2015 as one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals to be realized worldwide.



Japan's Educational Leader – BUNKYO

Located near the center of Tokyo's 23 wards, Bunkyo Ward is known as a leading area for Japanese education. The ward has produced many literary masters, such as Natsume Soseki, Mori Oogai and Ishikawa Takuboku. Furthermore, the area is home to several prestigious educational institutions, such as The University of Tokyo and UN Women Japan, a United Nations body.

Ochanomizu University is also one such educational institution. Founded in 1875, the historic

women's university has continued to send highly intelligent women into society. In addition, the school, known for its highly advanced gender laboratory, made a revolutionary announcement on July 10, 2018, namely that Ochanomizu "Women's" University is going to start accepting transgender students. With a planned start in 2020, the new initiative is expected to change the social status of the transgender community, leading to the formation of a society where "various" women can also

have a chance to take initiatives in a wide range of fields. Through the new project, there is no doubt that Ochanomizu will continue to be a front-runner in education on the gender equality movement in Japan.

Bunkyo has greatly contributed to educational development not only in the past, but also in the present. There is no doubt that the ward will continue to be at the frontier of education in Japan.

(By Mayuka Takasugi)

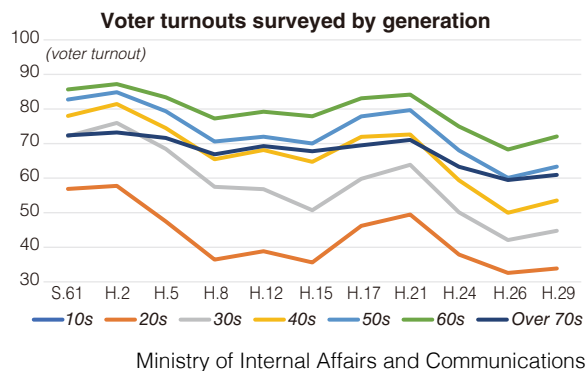
Simplify Election System to Gain Young Voters

It is said that young people in Japan are not politically active enough. Following the Japanese legislature's revision of the Public Offices Election Law on June 29, 2016, Japanese residents 18 years or older now have the right to vote.

At the time, officials anticipated that lowering the voting age from 20 would raise political awareness among younger generations. However, such hopes have yet to be realized. After two elections with the revamped law (one for the House of Representatives and another for the House of Councillors), teenage voter turnout remained at around just 40 percent, falling short of lawmakers' expectations. Moreover, the turnout among people in their 20s was about half the voter turnout among people in their 60s.

You may have heard such a concern about modern Japanese society: "Younger generations seem to lack interest in politics, even though they are the very generation building the future of this country."

Concerned adults sought to address this problem by holding special lectures at schools to teach students how to vote, how



to determine one's favorite candidate, and so on. However, a lack of interest in politics may not be the only reason for low voter turnout.

Typically, the Web pages of candidates are assembled on websites powered by the election admission committee, requiring visitors to click and jump to each page to check all the profiles of the candidates. This could be frustrating for young people who are used to swift access to what they demand. Young people tend to dislike time-consuming work, particularly when they do what they are not interested in. In that sense, some people even feel reluctant to go to polling stations. What is more, younger residents seem to have a distrust of politicians. They are concerned that their

vote will not change anything, considering that there may be little difference among the candidates.

To improve these circumstances, it is necessary to conduct an overall review of systems related to elections, such as websites and election campaigns. Without simply focusing on the passivity of younger generations toward elections, it is essential to make elections easier to understand not only for younger generations, but also for all voters. Making the voting steps clearly understandable will lead to friendlier feelings toward elections.

The primary reason for carrying out an election is to choose a certain number of candidates as the representatives of voters. In other words, an election is an important way for electorates to reflect their opinions in politics. By abstaining from voting, one loses the right to do so. We should be aware of the fact that each vote has significance. Many individual votes makes strong public opinion.

By Hazuki Sasamoto, Yui Tanaka, Amane Shingae and Ayane Inuzuka

Nihonbashi to Get Sky Back, but Challenges Remain

The sky over Nihonbashi may soon be clear again. Thanks to the adoption of a project to remove the Metropolitan Highway running above the bridge, the previous landscape the area was famous for is expected to be restored, though in a more modern manner.

Standing over the Nihonbashi River in Chuo Ward, the national bridge is the center of all Japanese roads and one of the most cherished landmarks in the country. However, since the rush of infrastructure development for the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, the Metropolitan Highway has covered the bridge and blocked the sunlight from reaching it.

Displeased with the situation spoiling the scenery of the monumental bridge for years, locals collected and submitted nearly 440,000 signatures with a demand for the Japanese Diet

that the highway be relocated. After many years and countless discussions, a project to move the obstructive highway underground was adopted by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) on July 18, 2018.

As the main operation in this project, the MLIT has announced a plan for a large-scale construction, involving the burying of 1.8 kilometers of highway between Kandabashi and Edobashi. Many people are optimistic about the project, as it is expected to revive a beautiful landscape, renew the aging road, and make the highway more earthquake-proof compared to being elevated.

However, there are several problems with the plan. One is the extremely high cost. The MLIT, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, the Metropolitan Expressway Company Limited



Photo by Yoshie Kobayashi

Current structure



Nihonbashi Renaissance

Artist rendering

and Chuo Ward agreed on a total project cost of about 320 billion yen, much higher than the average cost of building a highway, about 53.6 billion yen.

Another problem is that the underground installation will take years to complete, with the construction period estimated to be more than 10 years. The deterioration of the existing road is a great concern. When the new underground passage is complete, it will have been 71 years since the highway between Kandabashi and Edobashi opened, and thus there are no safety guarantees. Furthermore,

vehicle regulation, which is necessary when constructing new highways, is feared to paralyze traffic in the already busy surrounding area.

Considering the problems and opposing opinions above, it will be a great challenge to carry the project out. Still, we hope this meaningful project will be successful and worthy of the time and money spared, with current setbacks and thoughts being properly considered in the process.

By Yuki Maruyama, Yuri Nishida, Minami Kobayashi, Arisa Kikuchi and Momoka Sotowada

Lawmakers Get ‘Lesson’ on Global Education

Increasing school enrollment rates is often emphasized to improve education worldwide; however, while being an equally important point, enhancement of the quality of education is often overlooked.

Children in low-income countries, who are more likely to be excluded from school than those in high-income nations, still face problems because of poor educational environments, even if they go to school.

Many such children are required to walk long distances to attend their nearest schools and commute on often dangerous school routes. An article published by WE, an international organization working as an educational partner, tells a story of a boy who drowned while trying to get to school in a neighboring community across the river.

Another problem is the shortage of well-trained teachers, a situation that can prevent

children from gaining adequate literacy and numeracy skills.

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) provides financial support to ensure a quality basic education, giving priority to the poorest people in low-income countries and those living in nations where there is conflict. Launched in 2002, developed countries have contributed to the GPE Fund, though Japan accounts for only 0.5 percent of the amount.

“The World’s Largest Lesson” is a global event to understand the current educational situation in the world. Held in more than 100 countries during the same period, it aims to spread awareness of the importance of education. Eight Japanese junior and senior high school students, including one from Ochanomizu University Senior High School, conducted such a “lesson” for Diet Members as “teachers.” Twenty-four upper and lower



Photo by Japan NGO Network for Education

Diet members listen to an appeal for greater educational support.

house members attended the lesson as “students,” as well as other members of society interested in the topic, and learned how necessary education is and what kind of support is currently provided.

At the end of the lesson, the teachers proposed that Japan should provide not only visible, but also “invisible” support. They mentioned that Japan mainly focuses on providing visible support such as building schools and emphasized the need for invisible support, such as teacher training, as well. Japan has taken the latter somewhat lightly, believing that the results

would be unclear. The “teachers” then suggested that Japan should expand its contribution to the GPE Fund as an example of providing invisible support, considering that one of the focus areas of the GPE is teacher training.

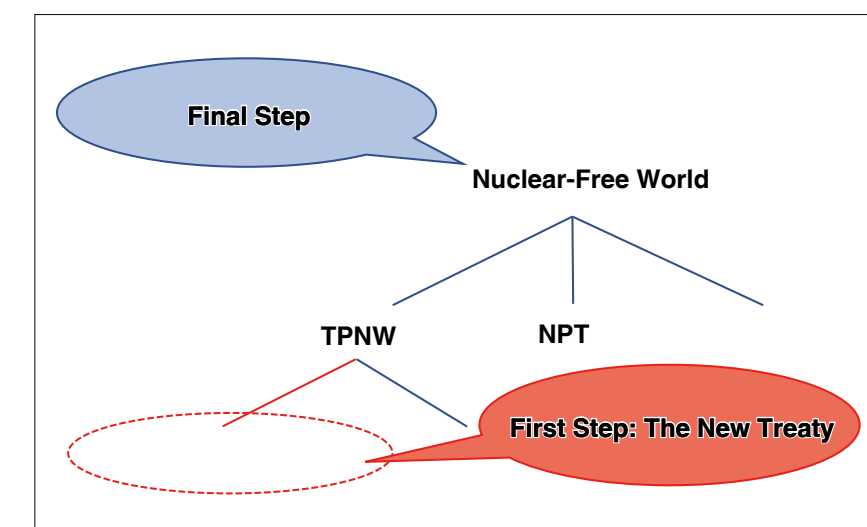
“I was glad that the members of the Diet promised to make an effort to expand the support,” an Ochanomizu high school student said. “I hope support from Japan will improve the global education situation.”

By Kanae Akehata, Rio Iso-buchi, Anna Imai, Yuki Ogawara and Yuki Furuhashi

A Nuclear-Free World: From Fantasy to Reality

On July 7, 2017, the first-ever international agreement to prohibit all nuclear activities was adopted at a United Nations conference. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) bans all state parties from testing, producing, using, possessing, deploying and transferring nuclear weapons.

Until that time, the international community had been discussing the agenda of nuclear disarmament in accordance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which identifies nuclear weapon states (the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France and China) and non-nuclear weapon states (the remaining 186 countries in the world except for India, Pakistan, Israel and South Sudan) to prevent the spread of the dangerous arms and weapon



Credit by Mio Sakai

technology. It can thus be said that the TPNW has completely different characteristics and roles in the field of nuclear disarmament compared with the previous agreement. What seems to be lacking, however, is a compromise among countries that pose and do not pose a nuclear threat, with both supposed to be aiming at the

same goal together. Furthermore, not only nuclear weapon states, but even Japan, representative of a non-nuclear weapon state, has not signed it, extinguishing the purpose of the whole treaty.

Nuclear disarmament can only be achieved when both types of states take concrete actions based on a consensus. Therefore, considering the

current gap between the two sides, a new negotiation approach is needed to find a way out of the stagnant situation.

As shown in the diagram on the left, more detailed treaties branching from existing agreements such as the TPNW can be one efficient solution; not only would this narrow the gap and strengthen the main treaty through further compromises, but also it would fundamentally prompt both sides to sit down at the negotiating table.

Starting with prohibiting the increase in production of nuclear weapons, both nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states need to proceed with negotiations on the matter in a positive manner.

By Yoshino Otomo, Mio Sakai, Nodoka Murakami and Hana Watanabe

ENVIRONMENT

Couriers Kiss Redelivery Goodbye

Today, the increase in package redeliveries has become a social problem in Japan. According to a survey conducted by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, 19.1% of all deliveries are being redelivered yearly, meaning that almost one out of five end up in redelivery service. Furthermore, 42,000 tons of carbon dioxide are emitted by trucks and a total of 180 million hours are spent to redeliver those packages every year. It is clear that redelivery is causing serious issues in terms of protecting the environment and providing good working conditions.

Now, Open-Type Courier Lockers, installed in public places such as convenience stores, are gathering attention as an effective solution to these redelivery problems. The service, whereby couriers simply need to put undelivered packages in online-managed lockers for customers to take out on their own, is expected to help reduce the number of redeliveries. What is more, the system is also considered to reduce extra labor and be environmentally friendly with the decrease in air pollution caused by vehicles.

However, the solution has a major drawback. Current social recognition and the

usage of the Open-Type Courier Lockers are surprisingly low. According to a survey taken at Ochanomizu University Senior High School, nearly 70% of the students said that they didn't know about the existence of such lockers. In response to this, students of the Economic Development and Environment Course at Ochanomizu visited Yamato Transport Co., Ltd. to learn what kind of measures are being taken to reduce redeliveries. They discovered that the corporation is going to continue introducing Open-Type Courier Lockers in order to solve the redelivery problems.

Based on these situations, the students made a leaflet and distributed it to their fellow high school students to promote the service; they drew a map where the lockers could be found and included some information about the system and its benefits. As a result, 70% of redelivery users among the student body agreed in the questionnaire taken again after the distribution that they would use the service if they knew where the lockers were; the distribution of the leaflets was thus a great success, bringing awareness of the convenient service to more people.

In 2017, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's administration decided to spend 500



Photo by Akari Karakasa

Open-Type Courier Locker

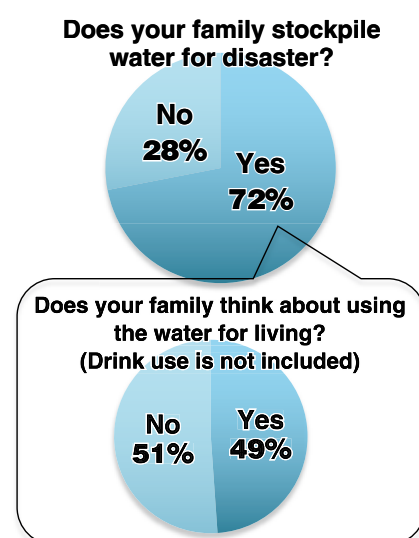
million yen from the national budget to support the installation of more Open-Type Courier Lockers.

By Akari Karakasa, Yurika Okabe, Rina Suzuki, Manami Nakano and Mana Hashimoto

Domestic Rainwater, a Resource with Potential

As a country constantly having various types of natural disasters hanging over it, Japan's water supply often gets extensively cut off when disaster strikes. The country experienced a serious water outage in 2011; according to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, the Great East Japan Earthquake stopped water from reaching 25,700 households in 19 prefectures, with the outage rate as high as 19%. Furthermore, most of those households had great difficulty getting a hold of domestic water more than drinking water, which could be provided by emergency water trucks. Still, a survey conducted at Ochanomizu University Senior High School shows that 72% of all students' households store water, but half of them do not plan to use it as domestic water. Securing domestic water and alerting residents about the need is one of the many challenges we face

The result of the survey



Credit: Haruka Fukumura

in disaster prevention today.

To solve this situation, students of the Economic Development and Environment course at Ochanomizu University Senior High School considered using rainwater. The cheap and easy-to-secure resource is thought to be capable of being utilized as domestic water for purposes such as

bathing, injury irrigation and dish washing.

However, despite rainwater's benefits, some people may be anxious about its safety. The Rainwater Citizens' Association conducted an examination in 2006 regarding pH levels, bacteria and metal elements of rainwater, saying that such water can be used safely as long as it is boiled in advance and not drunk. In reality, this system has already been made use of, benefitting citizens not only in emergencies, but also in daily life. For example, the "Rojison" rainwater tank in Sumida Ward has played its part by providing water for residents during disasters, while the site also serves as a children's playground in everyday life.

To spread the idea, the students devised a simple rainwater tank with common materials and exhibited a video on how to make one on "New Resource: Rainwater," a website

they made on their own. Also, by putting up posters, they shared the necessity of always securing domestic water with students at their school and do-it-yourself store customers.

By Towako Tsuboi, Haruka Fukumura, Fuka Takahashi and Miyu Yatagai

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