

Common Issues That Women Journalists Face

During the three-day exchange program, 33 women journalists from Japan and Asia Pacific countries had a discussion and exchanged opinions from various perspectives on women's empowerment in the media and how women journalists can play an active role.

Through such exchange, various challenges surrounding women journalists as well as common challenges among different countries became apparent.

Common challenges among women journalists

- ▶ It is important to have a social norm in addition to various national or company systems in maintaining balance between private life such as pregnancy/child rearing and career.
- ▶ Dilemma of having to balance between pursuing scoops day and night and women's empowerment, too much attention on not allowing women to cover dangerous stories, or deep-rooted division of gender roles. These are common challenges transcending borders.
- ▶ It is important for each journalist to take his/her own initiative by understanding that issues surrounding women are not just for women, but men need to understand the value of accepting diversity. It is necessary to strategize visualizing reader's needs in order to promote such understanding and for men to read more articles on gender.
- ▶ The media should cover more stories on gender issues in other countries for readers to deepen understanding on gender issues.
- ▶ Women are portrayed as housewives in most teaching materials and picture books. More women journalists need to be aware of such contents as they need to change in line with societal changes.
- ▶ More women's perspectives are needed to cover stories on sexual violence, which may be difficult for men to imagine.
- ▶ It is necessary to realize the desired working style and career for women journalists through engaging in dialogue with their boss to deepen mutual understanding and by joining forces to solve the problem of work life balance in the media.

The voices of women journalists in this report make us realize once again the importance of having diversified perspectives within the media, which has a major influence on forming a public opinion.

Our hope is to deepen mutual understanding, friendship and trust in the Asia Pacific region through women journalists' network as well as individual action of Hasshin! (moving forward, disseminate information). At the same time, the Gender Equality Bureau will take initiatives to promote women's empowerment in the media by following up on various issues presented by women journalists.