



## **20 Years from Beijing – Changes and Challenges**

### **[Osumi FM Network](#)**

#### Programme Script:

Host: Today we have two guests from the NGO WS Hyogo, Ms. Onishi and Ms. Tanaka, both in anonym, who talk about the 20 years since the Beijing Women's Conference. First of all, please tell us about your organization.

Guest: It's a private organization which supports domestic violence victims.

Host: How long has it been active?

Guest: 15 years now.

Host: You both participated in the conference 20 years ago in 1995. How did it happen?

Guest: We were among about 35 people in Amagasaki-city who intended to go to Beijing.

Host: We had had Hanshin Awaji Great Earthquake in January in 1995. Did it affect your plant to go to Beijing in September?

Guest: Some people gave up attending the conference. We started preparation to have a workshop focusing on women and earthquake.

Host: What was your impression about the conference?

Guest: We saw many people in various costumes. We realized that we were at a world conference. We got excited.

Host: What kind of workshops did you attend?

Guest: Many kinds of workshops about violence against women. We were surprised to know violence against women could be in a variety of scenes and forms.

Host: How did the experience in Beijing influence you?

Guest: A movement to make shelters in Japan emerged. In that, female activists in our region got together discussing what to do and shared intention to create a

shelter in Kobe-city.

Host: How long did it take to open a shelter?

Guest: About a year. We opened it and started telephone counseling in 1999.

Host: What was the biggest change since you had started activities?

Guest: A law was enacted.

Host: What law exactly was it?

Guest: So called Domestic Violence Prevention Law, legislated in 2001.

Host: What did the law change the most?

Guest: It defined administrative responsibilities on domestic violence prevention. And it helped related legislations and policies change favorably. Before the law was introduced, victims had to use public facilities with no legal basis.

Host: It was a big progress. Did it change a way the police got involved?

Guest: Yes. Till the enactment the police had not been able to intervene in domestic violence incidents which had been considered as private matters. With the law the police can rescue victims and punish perpetrators.

Host: While the legal progress was made to support women, there have been still challenges.

Guest: People's traditional recognition on DV has not changed so much and they still tend to think DV occurs at particular homes and harms particularly poor women and children. But the official survey shows it's wrong. Every 4 homes has DV issue and every 10 victims receives DV repeatedly. There are cases in which victimized women don't recognize the abuse they receive as DV, misunderstanding DV should be severer or blaming themselves.

Host: Some victims are killed by DV. There are more recognition about physical violence but less of it about economic, sexual one, or violence involving children.

Guest: There are few people, once they are involved, who recognize those types of violence as DV. It's partially because many of them had similar experiences at their own homes as they grew up and tend to consider them as granted. Through our activities we've learnt victims suffer from a series of problems. Some are ethnic minorities and other have children with disabilities. Support to accommodate victims to shelters has been given to some extent, but support after they leave shelters has been much less. Some victims suffer from mental

depression afterwards. We'd like to continue our effort to tell the public about these issues revealed throughout our activities.

Host: Thank you very much for joining us today.

Guest: Thank you.