

Japan: Taking Action for Sustainable Development

© OKINAWA INTERNATIONAL MOVIE FESTIVAL



What are the bold actions being taken by the private sector to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in Japan?

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Japan uses comedy as a means of promoting the importance of gender equality for achieving sustainable development.

[Yoshimoto Kogyo](#), Japan's comedy-entertainment giant has joined forces with the [United Nations Information Centre \(UNIC\) in Tokyo](#), to promote the importance of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In March 2017, Yoshimoto Kogyo and UNIC Tokyo jointly organised an [online campaign](#)

[for International Women's Day](#) under the new partnership. Several popular female comedians from Yoshimoto Kogyo shared their messages on gender equality with the Japanese public through websites and social media platforms showing solidarity with all women around the world. Their messages, based on their own experiences, deeply resonated with the Japanese public.

Led by Yoshimoto Kogyo, the partnership also expanded to the [Okinawa International Movie Festival](#) in April 2017 to raise public awareness of the SDGs.

”

I believe that the purpose of every profession is to make the people we love happy. In other words, we all work for the well-being of people in Japan and across the world. As the saying goes, 'laughter brings forgiveness, and forgiveness brings laughter.' When there is laughter, we can muster the strength to bring happiness to others. By being involved in an activity to promote the SDGs, we wish to help inspire and create hope for the future with what little we can do as comedians and entertainers. We are committed to advancing the efforts toward actualising a global society filled with laughter.

Hiroshi Osaki
President and CEO
Yoshimoto Kogyo

”

Laughter can open up people's minds. Comedy and entertainment can break barriers. We really appreciate this great partnership with the creative community in the spirit of partnership crystallized in Goal 17.

Kaoru Nemoto
Director
UNIC Tokyo



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD

un.org/sustainabledevelopment

[f](#) GlobalGoalsUN

[t](#) GlobalGoalsUN

Japan: Taking Action for Sustainable Development



Mr. Hiroshi Osaki, President and CEO of Yoshimoto Kogyo
© OKINAWA INTERNATIONAL MOVIE FESTIVAL



Well-known female comedians promoting SDG5 on International Women's Day in solidarity with all women around the world (March 2017)
© YOSHIMOTO CREATIVE AGENCY

The event included a screening of a short promotional movie on the SDGs produced by top Japanese creators; a SDGs photo exhibition which included some taken by the Yoshimoto comedians; and a game for children to collect 17 SDG stamps featuring the comedians' messages.

Why do the above actions matter to the people in Japan?

Although the 17 SDGs are universal goals for all countries, people's awareness and recognition of the SDGs is low in Japan. According to a PwC study in 2015, the global average of the public recognition rate across 16 countries surveyed was 33 per cent, but in Japan it was only 22 per cent.

Comedians are uniquely positioned in the Japanese entertainment business as they not only perform comedies, but also appear in TV shows as presenters and commentators. Promoting the SDGs using public figures, such as the Yoshimoto comedians, is increasingly important as they have a wide public outreach as

influencers and connectors in the country.

What SDGs have been particularly advanced?

This approach helps advance Goal 4 on Quality Education, Goal 5 on Gender Equality and Goal 17 on Partnerships for the Goals.



”

Society is shackled by its own stereotypes of what women should look like. We are preoccupied with striving towards achieving societal standards of beauty. I like myself as I am.

**Yuriyan Retriever
Female Comedian**



un.org/sustainabledevelopment

GlobalGoalsUN

GlobalGoalsUN