



24th April 2020

Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister,  
Mr. Taro Aso, Minister of Finance,  
Ms. Sanae Takaichi, Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications,  
Government of Japan

### **Letter of Request Regarding Special Payments for COVID-19 Emergency Response**

With the declaration of a State of Emergency and local governments' requests to refrain from leaving homes and opening businesses for the prevention of COVID-19 spread, there is a concern that even more people would face economic hardship in the coming days. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication has announced the outline of a special payment on 20th April, as a response to this situation.

The YWCA of Japan regards this uniform payment of 100,000 JPY as an emergency Government measure responding to the current reality of many people facing living difficulties and uncertainty; at the same time, there are several aspects that we find problematic, including that the payments are directed for "those who are registered with Basic Resident Registration System as of April 27, 2020", and that they will be transferred to the bank account of each household, with the "head of household" being the recipient on behalf of all the household members.

As we work in each of our local YWCAs throughout Japan, striving for a society where people in vulnerable situations, including children with foreign roots and women exposed to domestic violence, can regain their dignity and live at ease, we earnestly hope that this "special payment" reaches all those who need it. For the sake of a society which leaves no one behind, as pledged in the SDGs, we request the following:

- **That the Payments cover all persons living in Japan**

While the Government policy is to include all persons registered in the Basic Resident Registration System regardless of nationality, if it requires foreign residents to hold a residence permit of more than 3 months and to be registered as residents, those who do not meet this requirement may fall in the gap. It is also necessary to secure concrete systems to ensure that people who lost their homes due to different reasons will receive this payment.

- **Simple and accessible application/ payment process and information dissemination in multiple language**

For those whose first language is not Japanese, there is a need for not only information

dissemination but also for consultation desks and consulting systems in “simple Japanese” and multiple language. Especially, non-Japanese domestic violence victims tend to be isolated, as they have limited access to communities from their own countries under this situation.

– **Payment should be made directly to individuals, instead of having heads of households receive them for their whole family**

While people holding documents such as “certification concerning victims of violence from spouses” will now be able to individually apply for payment in the area where they actually live, there are victims of domestic violence who are unable to obtain such certificates. There are also young people whose connection with their “heads of households” have been severed, including those who have fled from abuse. Special attention is needed for such situations where due receipt of the payments is rendered difficult.

– **Through dissemination of information and prompt execution of payment methods other than bank transfer**

There are migrant workers who do not hold a Japanese bank account. Also, there are cases where survivors who have fled from domestic violence or abuse have not brought along their “my-number” cards/notification letters, ID documents, bank account passbooks/cards etc.; do not have their own bank account; have not re-registered as an individual household or have not moved their residence registration. Also, if the perpetrator of violence work in government offices, they may hesitate to apply for payment. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure that measures such as exemption from showing ID if the recipient is recognized to have received support from not only public institutions but also private support groups, proxy application by assistance institutions, and payment methods other than bank transfer, are realized without delay,

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