

Focus Area 4

Secure Highly Capable Human Resources

In this focus area, to ensure the growth and sustainability of the AFF industries, The Norinchukin Bank trains high-quality human resources with both local and global perspectives. Moreover, at worksites, we ensure diversity and create a corporate culture where diverse human resources can perform to their fullest potential, striving to improve organization-wide creativity and innovative capabilities.

Topics		Direction of Our Initiatives
Topic 4-1	Improve diversity and equal opportunities	We engage in initiatives to create an inclusive and diverse work environment where women, people with disabilities and middle-aged to older workers can perform to their fullest potential. Also, we utilize and/or employ highly capable external human resources.
Topic 4-2	Enhance human resources development	We develop human resources capable of demonstrating their strengths in a self-starting fashion and taking on challenges boldly from the viewpoint of cooperatives and from a global perspective.

Major Initiatives

- Create a work environment where diverse human resources including women, people with disabilities and older workers can perform to their fullest potential
- Investment in human capital
- Efforts to nurture a sense of sustainability among employees

Related SDGs



Improve Diversity and Equal Opportunities

Basic Principles

Basic Policy on Human Resource Management

Basic Policy

- Form a group of capable, motivated human resources capable of catching the winds of change in the business environment and executing new business strategies
- Nurture high employee satisfaction by helping each employee to understand the strategies and goals of the bank and its cooperative group, as well as helping them to grow through tenacious engagement in their business duties with self-motivated passion for contributing and tackling challenges

Future Vision

- Develop essential human resources and cultivate employee engagement to realize our mission of becoming a leading bank that supports the AFF industries, food production and consumption, and the daily lives of local communities

In line with this basic policy, our efforts are focused on the planning and management of personnel systems, including performance and competency assessment systems, as well as on personnel development.

In interviews between superiors and subordinates, goals are set and achievements are verified. Furthermore, employee competencies demonstrated in a variety of work-related situations are reviewed. The repetition of this process allows us to promote employee awareness and effort toward contributing to performance and developing their own talents. We also offer support for these efforts with extensive training options.

Based on this system, we are building a structure to provide fair wages to each employee.

Communication Between Management and Staff

For the purpose of fostering employee engagement, The Norinchukin Bank conducts executive seminars as an opportunity for employees to talk with directors. Specifically in these seminars, we set up forums for open discussion with executives, whom employees would otherwise have limited opportunities to interact with, to exchange opinions, share thoughts from day-to-day work with management and get a more intimate sense of where management stands. In this way, we are working to deepen bidirectional communication.

Employee Satisfaction Survey

The Bank conducts a staff awareness survey for all employees one or more times a year. We have implemented an engagement survey effective from Fiscal 2021. The surveyed results are reported to the Board of Directors and other in-house bodies to analyze what they think about their works and identify the tasks. The resulting employee awareness visualized through the above procedure is used as a basis for effective measures to be pursued and implemented by the Bank, which aims to improve employee engagement and, by extension, enhance organizational vitality by having employees more content with their job and make worksites more valuable.

Anti-Harassment Measures

To prevent sexual or power harassment as well as harassment on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth and child- or nursing-care leaves, we engage in a wide range of activities such as providing e-Learning and position-by-position education, guidance and consultation by the persons in charge of human rights issues throughout the organization, and external contacts for consultation.

We have established and are operating a harassment hotline with which employees can conduct individual consultations, and are seeking to ensure a broad awareness that employees can quickly access the harassment hotline whenever they need to. Further More, we strive to protect the privacy of the persons concerned and to take prompt action.

So that we can ensure psychological safety in the workplace, we are focusing our initiatives on preventing harassment and strengthening the harassment hotline function.

Initiatives for Hiring People with Disabilities

The Bank strives to make a workplace where people with disabilities can carry out their duties in a vibrant manner, with a sense of fulfillment and security.

To this end, we established Norinchukin Business Assist Co., Ltd., an organization mainly engaging in finance-related administrative work outsourced by the Bank and group companies to expand the employment of people with disabilities.

Norinchukin Business Assist Co., Ltd.'s management philosophy is to assist each director and employee in working with earnestness and integrity so that they can develop their abilities and strive for self-realization through their work, and to create a workplace where directors and employees can always feel a sense of security and fulfillment in their work, valuing the consideration and communication of all individuals and enabling them to carry out their duties in a vibrant manner.

To offer a pleasant working environment, offices are designed to provide bright and spacious room for working comfortably, while providing single-occupancy relaxation spaces and a break room where people can lie down.

Supporting the Success of Senior Talent

To support the success of senior talent, the Bank offers career design training for understanding of self, understanding of environmental changes, and consideration of their personal and professional lives with a view on a post-retirement second career.

In addition, we have introduced a senior staff system, a meister system (a system for training skilled laborers) and more as options for them to continue to play an active role in our organization in the form of re-employment after retirement.

Initiatives for Work-Style Reform

The Bank has for some time operated a flexible work hour system designed to contribute to the diversification of employee work styles and the improvement of productivity. Since fiscal 2019, as part of efforts toward work-style reform, we have newly introduced a telecommuting system, as well as full-scale work interval systems and staggered shift systems. A work interval system is a health issue prevention measure stipulating that certain intervals be ensured between the end of work on the previous day and the start of work on the following day.

A staggered shift system allows employees to select their own start and end work times; this focused work improves productivity, streamlines working hours and raises employee awareness.

Furthermore, a telecommuting system allows employees to work from home, shared offices or other locations, in line with the diversification of workplaces. Given the developments in work styles stemming from the spread of COVID-19, we have further relaxed the telecommuting and staggered shift systems. Furthermore, we have introduced the flextime and hourly paid leave systems effective from fiscal 2022.

Results of Work-style Reforms

	FY2019	FY 2020	FY2021
Actual Work Hours	1,854	1,862	1,895
Average Overtime Hours			
All Employees	11.0	11.1	12.4
Career Track	14.6	14.8	16.7
Regional	6.7	6.5	6.6
Rate of Paid Leave Taken	72.7%	70.1%	69.6%

Major Work-Style Reform Systems

- **Half-day paid leave system**
→ System allowing annual paid leave to be taken in half-day units
- **Hourly paid leave system**
→ System allowing annual paid leave to be taken in one-hour units
- **Work interval system**
→ System requiring a certain time interval between the end of a day's work and the beginning of the next shift
- **Flextime system**
→ System allowing employees to decide their own allocation of daily working hours
- **Telecommuting system**
→ System allowing employees to work from home, in shared offices or other locations for the purpose of improving work productivity
- **Staggered shift system**
→ System by which employees can move their start and end times back or forward a certain time within a set range to give a more flexible work schedule
- **Flexible work hour system**
→ System allowing employees agreeing to fall under the system to work in a manner that is not constrained by prescribed start/end work times

Initiatives Supporting the Raising of Next-Generation Children and Promoting the Active Participation of Women

The Norinchukin Bank is working to support a work-life balance and the ability to both raise a child and have a career. We are also encouraging male employees to take parental leave. In addition to these measures and our efforts to increase the rate of women among new graduate hires, we are helping to build a network among female employees by holding Women Employee Career Forums.

To promote the active participation of female employees based on the Act on the Promotion of Female Participation and Career Advancement in the Workplace and the Act on Advancement of Measures to Support Raising Next-Generation Children, we have established a General Employers Action Plan and are making efforts in this area. Our first action plan from 2016 has been completed and was succeeded by a new plan launched in April 2019.

The Bank will continue to make multifaceted efforts to enhance the vitality of the organization and to create a work environment in which diverse employees can fully demonstrate their abilities and individuality, as well as remain active over a long period.

Results of Promotion of Active Participation of Women

	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021
Ratio of Women Hired			
Career Track	26%	34%	26%
Specified Roles	100%	67%	100%
Regional	75%	90%	78%
Share of Women Employees	34.2%	34.6%	34.9%
Share of Women Managers	6.2%	6.3%	6.6%

Action Plan for the Act on the Promotion of Female Participation and Career Advancement in the Workplace and the Act on Advancement of Measures to Support Raising Next-Generation Children (FY2019–FY2021)

- Target 1
Share of women in career-track/specified role new graduate hires: 20% → **Target met**
- Target 2
Implement and entrench various measures to promote work-style reforms → **Target met**

Action Plan for the Act on the Promotion of Female Participation and Career Advancement in the Workplace and the Act on Advancement of Measures to Support Raising Next-Generation Children (FY2022–FY2024)

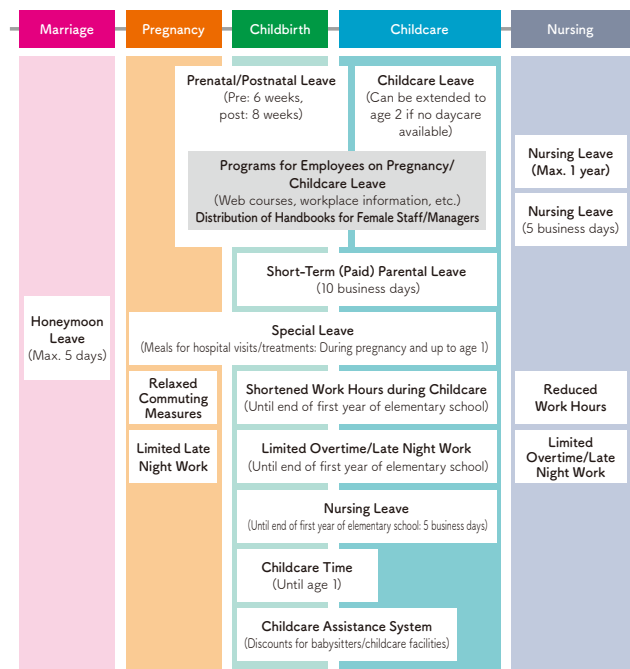
- Target 1
Rate of parental leave taken by men: 100%
- Target 2
Initiatives to “Implement, entrench various measures to promote work-style reforms“
- Target 3
Share of women in career-track/specified role new graduate hires: Approximately 40%

Childcare Support

To enhance our work-family balance support system, we have implemented a variety of systems to support employee childcare. Specifically, we have set up systems for employees to take special leave for pregnancy and childbirth, as well as a childcare leave systems We have also set up a short-term parental leave system so that male employees can offer further support for childcare. In addition, we have developed services that let employees access online courses (e.g., return to work courses) and company intranet message boards. These services are part of a program to provide information to employees who are on

pregnancy or childcare leave. We also provide a number of support options for childcare, such as offering pre-return interviews to employees who have taken pregnancy and/or childcare leave so that they can smoothly return to work. Based upon our General Employers Action Plan, the Bank supports the ability to both raise a child and have a career.

As such a company, we have held Kurumin Certification from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare since 2011. However, in recognition of our introduction of these systems and their utilization, we subsequently received Platinum Kurumin Certification in fiscal 2020.



Occupational Health and Safety

The Norinchukin Bank engaged in developing working environments where employees can perform their duties in good health and with a sense of security.

Our health management policy is formulated each year by the Occupational Hygiene Committee. This policy prescribes measures to be taken to reinforce the management of the physical and mental health of employees and help promote their health.

While ensuring that all employees take regular health checkups, we urge their families to take health checkups as well.

According to the results of these checkups, health guidance is provided by industrial doctors and medical staff. Efforts are also being made to reduce working hours, considering the possible adverse impact of long hours of labor on employee health.

As part of its efforts to ensure mental health at the workplace, we advise self-care methods for employees, offer counseling and other consultation opportunities, and conduct position-by-position mental health education. In addition, we carry out stress checks, offer readily available self-checking functions and have the Mental Health Consultation Room in place to provide consultations as required at the medical office in the head office of the bank.

To increase the health consciousness of employees and establish the practice of doing moderate exercise on a regular basis, we offer a wide range of educational programs and welfare services. Specifically, we subsidize sports club memberships and have health leaders lead health promotion activities.

Labor Relations

The Norinchukin Bank has an employee union as a counterpart organization to its management. In addition, this employee union employs a union shop system. As a general rule, all employees become union members on joining the Bank. Our employee union has the authority to negotiate with management on important matters such as the maintenance and improvement of labor conditions for its members. Furthermore, surveys are conducted with members to aid in negotiation with management, and forums have been established for offering various recommendations to management. For any changes in personnel and labor-related systems that would exert significant impact on the lives and work styles of union members, management is required to come to an agreement with the employee union, whether through the management committee, the labor committee or other negotiations.

Investment in Human Capital

Enhance Human Resources Development

In realizing the Purpose and the Mission of the Bank, the most important management resource is human capital. We intend to enhance human resources development through ongoing investments in human capital that are compatible with management strategies and tasks. Such efforts include establishing a human resources portfolio looking ahead to the changes in the business environment and ensuring human resources who can create innovation or added value.

For the development of employee careers, we deploy and assign the right personnel in the right job based on the competency, aptitude and career perspective of each person, as well as support self-fulfillment through work, by adopting the Career Challenge Program (a job transfer application system) and the Career Change Program. In addition, the Bank is aggressively recruiting and employing highly competitive external human resources.

When recruiting and assigning employees, care is taken not to exercise any type of discrimination.

With the goal of training core personnel in each headquarters, the Bank is actively providing opportunities for them to develop their skills in order to support the self-motivated efforts of each and every employee. For example, in addition to subsidy programs for correspondence courses, certification exams, foreign language study, and sending employees to overseas study and cross-industry seminars, we hold after-work training for each headquarters. We also hold after-work training, group study and other programs for employees based on their years of service and/or rank.

New Employees

In addition to the three-week entry training, new employees are sent to JA and agricultural corporations so that they can have diverse experience in Japan and overseas. The Bank also provides on-the-job training and offers a mentoring system for

each new employee.

Young, Mid-Career and Manager-Level Employees

For young, mid-career and manager-level employees, we help them develop their careers for further growth through such measures as placing them in temporary posts at JA and JA Shinnoren.

We are also deepening employee understanding of our fundamental mission by holding workshops led by specialists in the cooperative system and the AFF industries. These are designed to develop human resources who can play a role as employees of a cooperative organization.

Management-Level Employees

To raise the management capabilities of management-level employees, we offer programs for study at European and U.S. business schools, as well as personal coaching to help managers implement our management plan.

Career Development Support System

To help employees proactively work on their own career development, the Bank has implemented the Career Development Support System. Employees are able to take inventory of their own abilities and clarify their goals thanks to our career development training and career development interviews conducted with their superiors. After defining their career goals, they are encouraged to carry out career development based on the job capability requirements of employees in each headquarters.

Principal Human Resource Programs

Group Training

- Career development training: Foster an awareness of career development by taking an inventory of employee abilities and through self-analysis
- Management training: Acquire and improve knowledge and business skills needed for management, including leadership, junior staff development, vision making and work efficiency
- Managerial development training: Acquire and improve knowledge required for organizational management, division and branch management, etc.
- The Norinchukin Bank Business School: Improve and deepen understanding of basic business management theory and consulting abilities, and build cross-departmental networks

Personal Development Support

- Financial support for online learning content, correspondence courses, gaining external certifications and foreign language training: Support for employee self-directed career development by partially subsidizing various studies

Outside Studies

- Graduate School of Business (managers program): Acquire advanced management skills at domestic and overseas universities
- Overseas study: Acquire specialized knowledge and global viewpoints through attendance at an MBA or LL.M program
- Overseas branch trainee system: Foster global perspectives in less-experienced staff by posting them at overseas branches
- Exchange personnel and acquire specialized knowledge by sending staff to cross-industry training, asset management companies, JA and JA Shinnoren

New Employee Training

- Workplace training system for new employees, instructor training, mentorship system
- Entry training, on-site training at JA, on-site training at agricultural corporations

Other

- After-work training
- Lectures by specialists from cooperatives, fostering of awareness as employees of the cooperative system through staff workshops
- Business English language lessons
- e-Learning

Development and Skills Enhancement of Cooperative Member Human Resources

In alliance with Norinchukin Academy Co., Ltd., a training specialist for cooperative members, The Bank is working to develop human resources that meet the trust and expectations of individual members and customers, targeted at the senior management and employees of JA Bank, JF Marine Bank and JForest Group, by pursuing initiatives to 1) nurture and strengthen the power of Reform Leaders who promote the practice of prefectural and JA strategies and 2) promote the acquisition and enhancement of specialized skills and knowledge. We have offered online personnel training sessions to reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection, in addition to gatherings in the conventional meeting format.

Strengthened Human Resource Training Initiatives to Achieve JA Bank Medium-Term Strategies

We continue to hold the JA Bank Central Academy—Managers Course targeted at directors in charge of JA's banking business, the Senior Executives Course targeted at senior managers in charge of JA's banking business, the Seminar for JA Presidents/Board Chairpersons targeted at JA presidents/board chairpersons and the Block Symposium targeted at JA's branch managers and mid-career employees. Through these training courses designed to develop human resources who can lead the reform of JA and JA Shinnoren, we have supported the business reform of JA Bank.

We are also engaged in the development of the human resources required to promote the measures of the JA Bank Medium-Term Strategies by offering training options allowing them to acquire specialized skills and financial knowledge, including group trainings, correspondence courses and qualifying tests.

Human Resource Training Initiatives at JF Marine Bank

For JF Marine Bank, we are focused on developing the human resources necessary to enhance the fishery financial function by continuing its group trainings, such as the JF Marine Bank Innovative Leader Training: Course targeted at store managers of JF Shingyoren and the Step-Up Seminar targeted at fishery industry financial consultants and other staff, as well as offering online training that allows trainees to learn a variety of basic knowledge required for fishery finance.

Supporting Human Resources Training at the JForest Group

We support JForest Group's organizational reform initiatives by helping to nurture the human resources leading the organization. We do this through holding the Seminars for JForest targeting top executives at JForest and JForest Moriren (Prefectural Federations of Forestry Cooperatives), as well as JForest Cooperatives Counsellor Training aimed at personnel holding the title of counsellor, who support the backbone of JForest's practical management.

Personnel Exchanges between the Bank, JA, and JA Shinnoren

The Norinchukin Bank has enhanced personnel exchanges with JA and JA Shinnoren, and has been working to achieve mutual understanding and sharing of know-how within JA Bank Group. Specifically, we accept trainees from JA, educating them so that they can play a key role in the banking business and gain wide-ranging business know-how. We also accept staff and trainees seconded from JA Shinnoren, who work in various areas such as retail planning, administration, systems, agricultural and corporate loans, and securities investment.

Moreover, we second staff to cooperative organizations (e.g., JA and JA Shinnoren) in order to deepen their understanding of the actual work of cooperatives from the point of view of employees of the central organization for cooperatives and of a financial institution for farmers, fishermen and foresters.

Workshop on Sustainable Food Systems

To better understand the trends and issues in the world to ensure the sustainability of the AFF industries and the food and agriculture value chains and connect them to future initiatives, in June 2021 we held the “Workshop on Sustainable Food Systems” targeting officers and employees across the country (online format was also adopted). We invited KUBO Maiko, Minister’s Secretariat and Director, Global Environment Policy Office, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and KIKUCHI, Minister’s Secretariat and International Affairs Officer, International Organizations Division, International Affairs Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, to the workshop as lecturers. Thanks to their comments, the participants fostered a better understanding of the domestic and global trends toward the realization of “Sustainable Food Systems” and exchanged opinions regarding future initiatives of the Bank.

e-Learning Course

To improve knowledge and foster awareness about sustainability among executives and employees, we held an e-Learning course in November 2021 for all senior management and employees themed on sustainability management.

It consisted of 12 questions ranging from basic knowledge to recent trends and the Bank’s efforts and was designed for participants to deepen their understanding through repeating the course until reaching the criteria to pass.

We plan to hold e-Learning courses annually in fiscal 2022 and beyond.

e-Learning Example Questions

Q: Of the following, which is incorrect regarding the AFF industries and the issue of climate change?

- (1) Given that it takes place in nature, agriculture is one of the few industries that can contribute to solving the problem of climate change.
- (2) In excess of 80% of greenhouse gases from agriculture comprise methane (CH₄) from fermentation in the digestive tract of cattle emitted as burps and from paddy fields, and nitrous oxide (N₂O) generated from agricultural soil, fertilizers, waste management and similar.
- (3) The AFF industries are susceptible to the problem of climate change, and high temperatures are already acting as barriers to growth and reducing product quality. However, there are also opportunities in this, such as increased arable land because of higher temperatures.
- (4) The Japanese government is also working on initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the AFF industries. These include measures to reduce emissions from horticultural and agricultural machinery, energy-saving measures on fishing boats, measures to reduce emissions from agricultural soil, and carbon sequestration in forests and agricultural soil.

Correct answer: (1)

Explanation: Greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture account for about 10% of total worldwide emissions and are one cause of accelerating climate change.

Topics

JA Farming Volunteer Team

The Bank will soon celebrate the 100th anniversary of its founding in 2023. As a commemorative event, we have launched an original project. The project encourages Bank employees to search and discover a local community with which he/she would like to be involved in its future development. In other words, this Purpose Relevance project aims to support the Purpose of the Bank through personal involvement.

The Bank participates in the “JA Farming Volunteer Team,” which works to dispatch farming volunteers who are formed within JA Group as part of this project.

Along with fewer foreign farmers due to the expanded contamination of COVID-19, the labor shortage at farms (local communities) has become aggravated in Japan. Given such adverse circumstances, the JA Farming Volunteer Team consists mainly of about 30 younger employees engaged in harvesting operations at two farms.

One harvest operation occurred in December 2021 at a mandarin orange farm in Fujieda City, Shizuoka, and the other was in March 2022 at a leek farm in Kasukabe City, Saitama.



A snapshot at the mandarin orange farm