Examining The Legal Landscape for Street Involved Children and Youth: Japan 2015

By Pro Bono Volunteers From

Baker & McKenzie and

In preparation for

International Summit on the Legal Needs of Street Youth
# Table of contents

International Street Youth Project Contributors List ...................................................................... 1

I. **Introduction** ............................................................................................................................. 2

II. **Homelessness** ......................................................................................................................... 2
    A. Current Situation .................................................................................................................. 2

III. **Currently Implemented Measures** .......................................................................................... 4
    A. Measures Taken by the National Government ....................................................................... 4
    B. Measures Taken by Local Governments .............................................................................. 5
       1. Measures Taken by the Osaka Prefecture ........................................................................... 5
       2. Measures Taken by Tokyo ................................................................................................. 9
       3. Measures Taken by the Kanagawa Prefecture .................................................................... 10
    C. Measures Taken By the Private Sector ................................................................................... 11

IV. **Effectiveness of Measures** ................................................................................................... 12
    A. Public Sector ....................................................................................................................... 12
    B. Private Sector ...................................................................................................................... 12

V. **Future Issues Surrounding Homelessness and Poverty** ......................................................... 13

VI. **Issue 2: Poverty** .................................................................................................................... 13
    A. Current Circumstances About Poverty .................................................................................. 13
    B. Specific Issues ...................................................................................................................... 14
    C. Measures Actually Taken or Potentially to Be Taken ........................................................... 16
    D. Future Issues Surrounding Poverty ....................................................................................... 22
International Street Youth Project
Contributors List

We are deeply grateful for the support of the following volunteers from Baker & McKenzie and Merck and the many public interest law experts, who made this International Street Youth Project possible.

Mayoko Haga
Hiroshi Kondo
Tsugihiro Okada
Ayako Shiraishi
Daniel V. Stern
Hinako Sugiyama
Kazuhiro Takahashi
Ryosuke Tateishi
I. Introduction

Rather than focusing solely on street-involved children and youth, this Memorandum provides a general description of the homelessness and poverty issues in Japan, an analysis of corrective measures implemented by both public and private sectors, and a discussion of their effectiveness. This is largely because statistics and other information specifically with respect to the child and youth population are not readily available. This Memorandum is prepared, therefore, to look at the circumstances of homelessness in Japan more generally so that the circumstances of youth and children who are street-involved or street-dependent can be extrapolated from this general information. The population and circumstances of street-involved youth are not viewed as an issue of immediate concern in Japan.

In contrast to many countries, street youth in Japan are not a central concern to civic leaders as much as other kinds of disaffected homelessness. Japan has been experiencing an increase in both the number of older homeless persons and the length of time such persons have been living on the streets.

The poverty rate in Japan is relatively high when compared to the standards of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (“OECD”) countries. Specifically, there is a very high percentage of single working parents with one or more child, currently at 50.8 percent. This is the highest rate among all thirty-four (34) OECD countries.

Examining homelessness more closely, it appears Japan may not even consider some teens “homeless” as that term is generally understood, but such persons still often require assistance.

The following summary should be read in light of the aforementioned considerations.

II. Homelessness

A. Current Situation

In 2002, Congress enacted the Act on Special Measures for Supporting Independence of the Homeless (the “Homeless Independence Support Act”) as temporary, ten (10) year legislation. In 2012, Congress extended the Homeless Independence Support Act for five (5) additional years in order to address the continuing challenge of homelessness, especially as the collapse of the economy during this period resulted in a significant increase in homelessness.

The Homeless Independence Support Act covers the following areas: (i) securing job opportunities; (ii) securing housing; (iii) implementing measures that ensure health insurance and medical treatment; and (iv) lifestyle counseling and instruction. The actual implementation of these policies, however, is left to the state and local governments.

In response to the Homeless Independence Support Act, the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare (“MHLW”) conducted a nation-wide survey\(^1\) in cooperation with the local governments to better understand the scope of the homelessness issue. According to that survey, the number of homeless persons in 2014 was 7,508, down from 13,124 in 2010, and 25,296 in 2003. Based on these figures, homelessness in Japan decreased by 70 percent since the Homeless Independence Support Act was enacted, a clear success by any measure due to the various homeless independence support programs that were adopted pursuant to the Act.

1) Overview of Homelessness

A group of relatively young persons who stay in all-night stores (e.g., internet cafés) and go back and forth between the street and a place under a roof include all the characteristics and embody all the needs of traditionally homeless youth. Although the period of time without a


www.bakermckenzie.com
residence is not extensive, such persons should be deemed homeless in a broad sense. Further, the number of young people facing these conditions is increasing.

A significant number of street youth should be included among homeless statistics in Japan. Statistics, however, suggest that the homeless population in Japan is becoming older and staying on the streets for longer periods. Seventy percent (70%) of the totality of homeless people are over fifty-five (55) years old.\(^2\)

The length of time on the streets is represented in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years on the Streets</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over 2 years</td>
<td>62.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 10 years</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Obviously, the longer homeless people live, the longer the street life statistics will be. Thirty percent (30%) of the homeless generation over sixty (60) years old have been living on the streets for more than ten (10) years. By contrast, forty percent (40%) of the homeless are under thirty-four (34) years old and stay on the streets for less than one (1) month.

The breakdown of the homeless by gender reveals almost ninety-three percent (92.6%) of the homeless population is men, and less than five percent (4.3%) is composed of women.

b) Living Place

As of April 2014, the number of homeless people living in Osaka was 1,864; 1,768 in Tokyo; and 1,324 in Kanagawa. These three city areas comprise 66 percent of the entire homeless population in Japan, as the tendency for homeless persons to concentrate in these locations is continuing to grow. In particular, homeless living in Tokyo and other large cities make up three quarters (75 percent) of the nation-wide homeless population.

c) Employment

Despite the general assumption that homeless people are unemployed, in fact, more than 60 percent of homeless people in Japan have a paying job. For instance, almost 70 percent of homeless people that have lived on the streets for more than three (3) years are employed. The longer the duration of the street life, the higher the ratio of employed homeless people.

Collecting waste accounts for almost 80 percent of the total jobs held by employed homeless persons. Some are engaged in special clean-up services in a program operated by the government, which is designed to provide job opportunities for homeless people. Construction day-labor is the second largest group at 9.3 percent.

In terms of income, almost 35 percent of homeless persons earn between JPY 10,000 to 30,000, and over 30 percent earn between JPY 30,000 to 50,000. Thus, contrary to the general assumption, a significant number of homeless persons, including the elderly, work for a living, yet still are unable to fully make ends meet.

d) Health Conditions

A significant number of homeless persons report negative health conditions. When inquired about their health conditions, 26.2 percent of the homeless persons surveyed described their conditions as “bad.” Among those, 64.3 percent stated that they do not have any health care.

---

When asked about the effect of this lack of care, 37.9 percent responded that they do not know their actual health conditions as they do not receive regular health check-ups. Homeless persons, however, desire to see this changed. When asked, over thirty-five percent (35.4%) said that they wanted to receive social welfare and medical treatment.

Other related statistics: 17.8 percent of homeless persons responded that they have trouble sleeping, and 6.9 percent responded that they have felt depressed for more than two (2) weeks at a time. It is reasonable to extrapolate from these statistics that a significant percentage of homeless persons suffers from mental disease, including depression.

III. Currently Implemented Measures

A. Measures Taken by the National Government

The Homeless Independence Support Act requires that national and local governments establish and implement policies appropriate for the actual circumstances in each region. At the national level, in response to this requirement, MHLW and Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport, and Tourism (“MLIT”) have established the Fundamental Policy Concerning Homeless Independence Support. At the local level, local governments have established specific plans to implement measures in accordance with local circumstances and are taking the required measures in order to assist homeless independence.

The main goal of homelessness support is to help stabilize lives by ensuring: (i) employment opportunities; (ii) a stable residence; (iii) medical treatment; and (iv) comprehensive independence support (including consultation and instruction).

a) Ensuring Employment Opportunities

There are several efforts under way in Japan to help ensure employment opportunities: (i) educating employers in order to deepen the understanding about homelessness issues; (ii) developing and communicating job offerings well-suited for homeless people by collecting information from the internet, cooperating with private organizations, and communicating information to homeless people; (iii) implementing career counseling and employment counseling designed for the homeless at institutions such as the Independence Support Center; (iv) promoting retention of homeless people in the workplace; (v) promoting smooth adjustment to the workplace by implementing temporary trial employment programs in the workplace; (vi) comprehensive implementation of employment support, workplace experience training, and related seminars hosted by a council established by an alliance with local governments and other relevant parties such as local private organizations; (vii) skills and vocational training; (viii) provision and collection of information concerning part-time employment opportunities for homeless people who have difficulties in becoming independent through full-time employment; and (ix) collaboration with non-profit organizations.

b) Ensuring Housing

The Homeless Independence Support Act also is intended to address housing issues for the homeless including: (i) priority treatment in choosing tenants of public housing managed by the local government; (ii) alliance with private rental housing and welfare organizations, including the Independence Support Center (utilizing the framework of the Residence Support Council3 in the local government under the Act for the Promotion of Offering of Rental Housing to Persons

3 Under Article 10 (1) of the Act, local governments, housing, land, and building dealers, rental housing managers, organizations providing residence support for persons requiring special assistance in securing housing, and others may establish a Residence Support Council for the purposes of counseling homeless persons on ways to ensure a smooth transition into a residence. A Residence Support Council can receive financial aid of up to JPY 10 million from the national government.
Requiring Special Assistance in Securing Housing); and (iii) development of private guarantee companies for homeless persons unable to find a guarantor.

c) Ensuring Sanitary and Medical Treatment

The Homeless Independence Support Act addresses sanitary and medical treatment, including: (i) medical services; (ii) measures to maintain health and sanitary conditions; and (iii) public education efforts aimed at medical providers regarding treatment of homeless persons. Specifically, these measures include:

- health counseling;
- medicine for homeless persons suffering from tuberculosis;
- face-to-face medication instruction by visiting homeless people in order to prevent recurrence of diseases and strengthening resistance to drugs due to incomplete treatment at Public Health Centers; and
- an obligation to provide medical treatment under the Medical Act and Dentist Act and utilization of a facility offering the Free or Low Price Medical Treatment Program (pursuant to article 2(3)9 of the Social Welfare Act).

d) Emergency Support

Emergency support measures include: (i) providing support for homeless persons that are hospitalized due to poor nutrition or health to ensure that such persons do not return to live on the streets after they are released; (ii) providing shelter through the Free or Low Price Lodging Program (pursuant to article 2(3)8 of the Social Welfare Act) for homeless people who urgently need lodging; and (iii) early discovery of homeless people who need emergency support.

Although there are a number of social programs for homeless persons as described above, generally, the requirements for obtaining public assistance are the same for homeless persons and those that are not homeless but otherwise require such assistance.

B. Measures Taken by Local Governments

This section describes the measures taken by the local governments of Osaka, Tokyo, and Kanagawa, the areas with the highest concentrations of homeless people. Considering the similarity among the measures adopted by these localities, the measures taken by the local government of Osaka are primarily described, with certain relevant differences highlighted regarding Tokyo and Kanagawa.

1. Measures Taken by the Osaka Prefecture

In response to the Basic Policy Concerning Support of Homeless Independence, the Osaka government established the Osaka Implementation Plan Concerning Support of Homeless Independence (from 2014 to 2018) on March 2014.

In Osaka, both state and municipal governments are implementing the following measures:

a) Counseling and Instruction Through Visitation

---

4 Under article 19(1) of the Medical Act and article 19(1) of the Dentist Act, every practicing physician and dentist may not refuse to provide diagnosis or treatment when requested. These provisions clearly show that those professionals are obliged to provide medical treatment.

5 A program which provides free or low price medical treatment to poor persons. Anyone can conduct the program as a Second Type Social Welfare Program regardless of what type of entity operates the program.

6 A program which leases residences at no cost or at a reduced price to poor persons. Anyone can conduct the program as a Second Type Social Welfare Program regardless of what type of entity operates the program.
The governments promote recovery from street life by visiting homeless persons’ living areas, determining such persons’ conditions and needs, and providing such persons with counseling. In addition, a counseling program was implemented for persons who are using emergency temporary lodging programs and are therefore likely to become homeless in the near future.

The services include: (i) housing and employment advice through an alliance with the Welfare Office and Public Employment Security Office, among other agencies and organizations; (ii) advice on obtaining medical and hygiene services as well as direct offering of such services through accompanying nurses and other medical professionals; (iii) offering services of other accompanying professionals, including lawyers, to assist with legal and financial issues such as debt settlement; (iv) support for homeless women or homeless persons with children through an alliance with the Social Welfare Office, Female Consultancy Center (Women’s Consultation Office),7 and Child-Family Center (Child Consultation Center)8; and (v) arranging emergency transportation for homeless people to hospitals or accompanying them for medical treatment through an alliance with organizations such as medical institutions, Social Welfare Office, Sanitary Office, and emergency agencies.

Chart 1, below, lists specific examples of the aforementioned measures.

[Chart 1] Types of Support Provided by the Osaka Visiting Consultancy and Instruction Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support Item</th>
<th>Examples of Support Provided (This list is not intended to be exhaustive)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alliance with facility manager</td>
<td>• Coordinating move-out instructions (explaining the homeless person’s intention on his/her behalf)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Obtaining agreement to remove any remaining items after departure and arranging implementation of removal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting street living places</td>
<td>• Confirming the safety of homeless persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Securing communication with homeless persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Listening and determining the homeless persons’ intentions, needs, and requests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Determining health conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for using emergency and temporary accommodation facilities</td>
<td>• Listening and determining the homeless persons’ intentions, needs, and requests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Clarifying the emergency issue to be resolved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Confirming the support policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support concerning medical treatment and health instruction</td>
<td>• Determining health conditions and providing health consultation and medication instructions by visiting nurses and public health nurses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Promoting medical treatment and transportation to hospitals (as well as accompanying homeless persons for such care)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 Administrative body established in each prefecture, functioning as the core of the women’s protection program, under article 34(1) of the Anti-Prostitution Law.
8 Administrative body established in each prefecture under article 12(1) of the Child Welfare Act.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support for identification</th>
<th>Accompanying homeless persons for identification requests such as requests for copies of family registries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support for recovery of status</td>
<td>Undertaking communication roles in connection with legal procedures addressing status, such as revocation or adjudication of disappearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supporting the application process for residency and citizen identification cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal support including settlement of debt</td>
<td>Offering legal support through the Japan Legal Support Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arranging consultations with visiting lawyers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support in receiving public pension</td>
<td>Accompanying homeless people to the public pension office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supporting the public pension claim process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support in receiving social welfare</td>
<td>Supporting the social welfare application process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support in protection of residence</td>
<td>Supporting selection of a housing agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accompanying homeless persons during searches and visits of possible housing options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supporting the execution of lease agreements, including explaining agreement terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supporting preparation for housing life (e.g., household budgeting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transporting homeless persons to housing facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support concerning facilities</td>
<td>Accompanying homeless persons in facility visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accompanying homeless persons in facility interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support in commencing daily life</td>
<td>Supporting opening bank accounts and using of ATMs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accompanying homeless persons to Welfare Office for purposes of receiving social welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment support</td>
<td>Accompanying the homeless to Hello Work, the Japanese government’s employment service center, and supporting job searches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Offering services through an alliance with employment support staff in the Social Welfare Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to prevent return to street life</td>
<td>Observing and securing emergency consultation through an alliance with social workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Counseling through periodic visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Planning, disseminating, and implementing local lifestyle counseling events</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
b) Securing Sanitary and Medical Treatment

Health consultations through visitations as described above are conducted on a periodic basis. Upon discovering a homeless person in need of medical treatments, the Osaka government offers information to such person about the Free or Low Price Medical Treatment Program.

In addition, the Osaka government implements tuberculosis diagnoses through an alliance with the Sanitary Office, medical institutions, Social Welfare Offices, and other organizations and agencies. If a homeless person is diagnosed with tuberculosis, the government becomes responsible for transporting the person to a hospital and providing appropriate medical treatment.

c) Implementing Social Welfare

The Osaka government offers different levels of social welfare for homeless persons depending on need, including directly at the homeless person’s living area.9

The government further intends to begin making social welfare determinations for homeless persons without an application.10

d) Securing Employment Opportunities

As a measure towards employers, the Osaka government endeavors to encourage the employment of homeless people through the Employment Support Program offered by the national government and also develops employment opportunities via the Osaka Homeless Employment Support Council11 and Osaka Homeless Employment Support Center Management Council.12 Furthermore, the government offers employment counseling, on-site job training, and employment support seminars at the Homeless Independence Support Center.13

For a homeless person who has difficulties in achieving independence by means of ordinary employment, the government provides information concerning part-time employment opportunities through an alliance with social welfare and other non-profit organizations.

e) Securing a Stable Residence

The Osaka prefecture offers assistance in connection with the application and move-in procedures for public housing pursuant to the Act on Promotion of Offering of Rental Housing to Persons Requiring Special Assistance in Securing Housing14 and Public Residence Act.

Furthermore, if a guarantor is required for a homeless person to move into private housing, but is not available, the government promotes the use of the Rent Debt Guarantee Program15 and provides information concerning private guarantee corporations.

---

9 Article 30(1) of the Social Welfare Act generally provides that social welfare services shall be provided in the living areas of persons who need such services.

10 Under article 25 of the Social Welfare Act, when persons require social welfare, the municipal governor must provide them with such welfare regardless of any application.

11 An organization consisting of the Osaka prefecture, the Osaka municipality, economic associations, and labor associations.

12 An organization consisting of the Osaka prefecture, the Osaka municipality, and private associations which operate the Osaka Homeless Employment Support Center.

13 A facility to support independence through employment for persons who seek employment and are able to work. Generally, qualified persons may stay in the facility for up to three months. The facility provides on-the-job training opportunities, a loan program for transportation and meal expenses during the recruiting period, and a guarantee based on the Employment and Housing Lessee Guarantee Program.

14 Article 5(2) of the Act provides that public rental housing operators must endeavor to consider the stability of the residence for persons requiring special assistance in securing housing.

15 The Foundation for Senior Citizens’ Housing offers a program in which the Foundation provides a joint and several guarantee for certain households to move into private rental housing. The households include elderly households (over 60 years old), disabled households, single-parent households, evicted persons, and others.
2. Measures Taken by Tokyo

Tokyo generally offers the same types of support programs as Osaka, with some differences. The Tokyo Metropolitan Government enacted the Tokyo Implementation Program for Homeless Independence Support in June 2014.

a) Independence Support Program

Until September 2010, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government has provided support through the Emergency Temporary Rescue Center and Independence Support Center, which implement independence support programs. In October 2010, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government implemented a new type of independence support center, which integrates such functions and has been providing comprehensive employment support from the earliest stage of the homeless person’s arrival at the center.

As a result, the employment independence rate has increased from 23 percent to 32 percent. Currently, 49 percent of all the homeless persons who have used the independence support program have become independent through employment, which is a remarkable accomplishment for this new support program.

b) Securing Employment Opportunities

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government established the Tokyo Homeless Employment Support Promotion Association (the “Tokyo Job Station”) in cooperation with private associations in September 2005 for the purpose of collecting and developing a broad range of employment opportunities with private companies. This association provides employment counseling and on-the-job training among other activities for homeless people.

Employers generally require guarantees prior to hiring a homeless person to cover possible losses. As homeless people often are unable to obtain such guarantees, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government has also set up a guarantee program in order to resolve this barrier for employment of homeless persons. This program, however, has not yet been widely used, likely due to the fact that it only covers physical damages and not other types of damages.

c) Securing Stable Housing

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government is implementing a Special Allocation Program for Tokyo Public Housing. For example, in 2013, the government allocated twenty (20) housing opportunities for homeless people who have successfully achieved independence through the Independence Support Center.

In addition, as housing tenants are required to have an emergency contact person when applying for a housing guarantee, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government also secures such emergency contact lines along with housing support organizations.

d) Securing Sanitary and Medical Treatment

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government offers sanitary and medical treatment for homeless persons, including health screenings, consultations, and tuberculosis testing. In the event a homeless person has a medical emergency and is transported to a hospital by ambulance, the government will cover such costs for a private hospital if it agrees to accept the patient and provide medical treatment. The government also promotes the use of the Free or Low Price Medical Treatment Program for homeless persons.
e) Emergency Support and Social Welfare

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government offers emergency support to homeless persons through the Free or Low Price Medical Treatment Program jointly with social welfare, medical, and emergency institutions.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government also offers social welfare programs, including providing housing rental deposits and lodging facilities for those persons unable to secure housing otherwise.

f) Support for Persons who are Likely to Become Homeless

Supporting persons who are in unstable housing situations, including persons staying internet cafés or other overnight retail establishments has recently become a significant issue. Such persons can be broadly viewed as “homeless.” These homeless persons generally are young males with unstable employment (e.g., temporary job with income of approximately JPY 150,000).

In April 2008, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government established the Tokyo Challenge Net, a program which supports unstable workers that lost their homes. The program offers various services to those in need, including (i) lifestyle consulting, (ii) housing consulting (e.g., offering loans covering initial expenses for securing housing or temporary living, granting rent guarantees, etc.), and (iii) employment consulting.

3. Measures Taken by the Kanagawa Prefecture

Kanagawa generally offers the same types of support programs as Osaka, with some differences. The Kanagawa prefecture established the Kanagawa Prefecture Implementation Plan for Homeless Independence Support (from 2014 to 2018).

a) Consultation

The Kanagawa prefecture offers Visiting Counseling Programs for homeless persons, which are funded by the national government. The Kanagawa prefecture has also established a legal consultation program to address various legal issues of homeless persons, such as debt settlements.

b) Emergency Support and Social Welfare

The Kanagawa prefecture offers emergency support services as well as general social welfare services such as hospital admission, assistance with social welfare applications, the Free or Low Price Medical Treatment Program, and the Free or Low Price Lodging Program.

c) Securing Stable Housing

The Kanagawa prefecture offers both private and public housing services for homeless persons. For private housing, the prefecture has established the Happy Rental Housing Support Program. For public housing, the prefecture offers services related to public housing facilities that it operates.

d) Securing Employment Opportunities

The Kanagawa prefecture promotes employment for homeless persons by offering employment counseling through the Public Employment Security Office and skills training courses through an alliance with the national government’s Day Laborer Skills Training Course Program.

---

16 This program assists senior citizens, disabled persons, foreigners, single parents, and others requiring assistance obtain private rental housing under the Housing Safety Net Act.
Kanagawa prefecture also promotes the development of job offerings through an alliance with the Kanagawa Homeless Employment Support Counsel.  

**e) Independence Support Program**

The Kanagawa prefecture offers services to allow homeless persons to become self-sufficient through its Independence Support Centers. At such centers, the prefecture offers meals, lodging, medical care, lifestyle counseling, and other services. The Kanagawa prefecture also establishes shelters through private facilities for municipal governments that do not have their own Independence Support Center.

### C. Measures Taken By the Private Sector

The private sector also provides substantial assistance in addressing homelessness issues. Although there do not appear to be any statistics on the involvement of private entities in this area, making quantification of their efforts difficult, there are a number of private entities operating in this field.

The Japanese government itself views the private sector as serving a critical role in assisting homeless persons. The MHLW’s Basic Policy Concerning Support of Homeless People's Independence provides that private sector entities closely involved with homeless people, such as NPOs, volunteering organizations, and the social welfare council, play an important role in providing assistance to homeless people as well as the local governments’ implementation of their policies by being wholly or partly delegated such tasks. Such organizations are encouraged to fully use their own existing facilities, knowledge, or human resources and provide support actively to projects operated by the local government.

The Policy further lists job assistance, housing assistance, medical treatment, and other services as areas where private sector cooperation is expected.

In accordance with this policy, the Kizuna Project for the Homeless and Others Suffering From Poverty, which is lead by the MHLW and implemented by the local government, provides counseling, housing, and lifestyle guidance, and the local government has delegated its role completely to the private sector. Below are some other examples of private sector efforts.

#### a) Food Aid

Businesses and other organizations have available significant amounts of food which is edible but yet is disposed of for a wide variety of reasons, such as breakage of packaging during transportation, packaging misprinting, unsold stock, foods whose best-before date is approaching although not expired, and food samples left over from exhibitions or other events. Second Harvest Japan is a private organization that collects such foods from businesses and organizations and delivers them to homeless persons.

According to Second Harvest Japan, it has presently concluded agreements with 605 organizations. The types of organizations span a broad range and include even IT and financial services companies. As a result of such cooperation and collaboration, the amount of food which Second Harvest collects has increased from 30 tons in 2002 when it first started to 3,152 tons in 2012.  

---

17 A private association consisting of the Kanagawa prefecture, Yokohama City, Kawasaki City, and Kanagawa Prefecture Labor and Welfare Association. The Counsel provides employment support service in response to requests from the MHLW.


19 MHLW, [http://www.mhlw.go.jp/topics/npo/03/10-09.html](http://www.mhlw.go.jp/topics/npo/03/10-09.html).


21 Second Harvest Japan, [http://2hj.org/about/sponsor.html](http://2hj.org/about/sponsor.html).
tons at the end of December 2012,\textsuperscript{22} which amounts to JPY 1.1 billion yen (approximately USD $11 million).\textsuperscript{23}

b) Housing Support

Moyai,\textsuperscript{24} one of the specified non-profit corporations, provides homeless people with assistance in obtaining housing. Since homeless people tend to be financially challenged and isolated, they often face difficulty in finding a guarantor (which is usually required under Japanese commercial practice) even if they wish (and are otherwise able) to lease an apartment. Moyai agrees to be the guarantor for homeless people to enable them to lease apartments.

c) Medical Treatment

Medecins du Monde Japon (Doctors of the World Japan) is a medical treatment volunteering team which was established after an emergency medical care team from France was dispatched to support Japan after the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake in 1995.\textsuperscript{25} Medecins du Monde Japon has been engaged in activities to enable homeless people to have better access to medical care and social welfare, improve their mental condition, and generally stabilize the local environment.\textsuperscript{26}

IV. Effectiveness of Measures

A. Public Sector

According to field surveys of homeless persons, the Independence Support Center is known to 64.6 percent of the respondents, and 10.1 percent have actually used the Center.

44 percent of the users of shelters and the Independence Support Center are young homeless persons, which is in contrast to the fact that older homeless persons tend to remain homeless for a longer period of time.

B. Private Sector

As stated above, it appears that there are no statistics specifically on the activities of private entities engaged in helping homeless persons. More generally, however, the Report on the National Survey and Study Session About the Current Status of Homelessness, released in 2012,\textsuperscript{27} published the results of a survey about various support activities for the homeless. According to the Report, provision of food, clothes, sleeping bags, and daily commodities, as well as security patrols are the most frequently used support services.\textsuperscript{28} This suggests that such support activities offered by the private sector would similarly be the most heavily used (and needed). 15.8 percent of respondents listed “other” support services, including medical consultations, bathing, laundry, and grooming.\textsuperscript{29}

When these figures are broken down by age group, homeless people under the age of 35 rely on food aid or security patrols less frequently than older homeless people, and instead heavily use daily life and job assistance counseling.\textsuperscript{30}

\textsuperscript{22} Second Harvest Japan, http://2hj.org/activity/result.
\textsuperscript{24} Moyai, http://www.moyai.net/.
\textsuperscript{27} MHLW, http://www.mhlw.go.jp/shoukouho/houdou/2r9852000002re1x.pdf
\textsuperscript{28} National Survey and Study Session about Current Status of Homeless, at 111 (2012).
\textsuperscript{29} Id.
\textsuperscript{30} Id.
The Report also points out that shelters provided by the private sector are frequently used in the big four cities, namely, Tokyo, Osaka, Yokohama, and Nagoya, although all of these four cities provide public shelters to homeless people (including those provided via lease arrangements with the private sector). This suggests that there is a high need for shelters in these areas, and the private sector supplements the public sector in meeting this need.

V. Future Issues Surrounding Homelessness and Poverty

Based on the above, the following conclusions can be drawn: (i) there is a stronger tendency for older homeless persons to remain homeless for longer periods of time, (ii) although the number of the younger homeless persons (under 35 years old) is not as high as the number of older homeless persons, there still appears to be a significant number of young homeless persons who live on the street for a short period of time and repeatedly use shelters, and (iii) the Independence Support Center or shelters are more frequently used by younger homeless persons or those who have lived on the street for a short period of time.

These conclusions suggest that the support services offered by the public sector effectively address the needs of young homeless persons, while inadequately addressing the needs of older homeless persons, who may not be aware of such services or choose not to use them.

Accordingly, in terms of resolving the issues of homelessness, two important initiatives could be (i) preventing young persons from becoming homeless in the first place, and (ii) providing more effective support to older homeless persons who have spent a number of years living on the street. With respect to the first initiative, the public sector’s measures appear to have functioned effectively to a certain extent. With respect to the second initiative, to address the issue more effectively, the government will have to develop additional ways to inform such persons of the availability of the services and/or determine why such persons choose not to use such services.

VI. Issue 2: Poverty

A. Current Circumstances About Poverty

  a) Change in Relative Poverty Ratio

Based on the “Annual records of changes of poverty ratio” in the MHLW’s Outline of the Survey on the Basis of People’s Living in 2013, the following trends can be highlighted:

(i) The relative poverty ratio has been almost consistently increasing since 1986, reaching 16.1 percent in 2012, the highest ratio since 1986;

(ii) The poverty ratio of children has been almost consistently increasing since 1986, reaching 16.3 percent in 2012, the highest ratio since 1986;

(iii) The poverty ratio among “active households” has been almost consistently increasing since 1986, reaching 15.1 percent, the highest ratio since 1986;

---

31 Id. at 7, 112.
33 The “relative poverty ratio” refers to the share of individuals living in households whose disposable income (total income of a household, after tax and social insurance, also referred to as spendable income) is below half of the median amount of equivalent disposable income (i.e., the disposable income divided by the square root of the number of family members), as used by OECD. MHLW, http://www.mhlw.go.jp/toukei/saikin/hw/k-tyosa/k-tyosa13/dl/03.pdf.
35 The “poverty ratio of children” refers to the percentage of the population of children under the age of 17 whose disposable income is below half of the median amount of equivalent disposable income. MHLW, http://www.mhlw.go.jp/toukei/saikin/hw/k-tyosa/k-tyosa13/dl/03.pdf.
The poverty ratio of active households comprised of more than two adults and one or more child generally has tended to show an increase, reaching 12.4 percent, the highest ratio since 1986;

The poverty ratio of active households comprised of only one adult and one or more child has consistently been more than 50 percent, reaching 54.6 percent in 2012; and

The poverty threshold has been dropping to lower levels. This indicates that the number of people who earn low incomes is increasing, while the income level as a whole has been decreasing.

b) International Comparison

Additional conclusions can be drawn by comparison of the Japanese poverty ratio in 201037 to other member states of the OECD38:

(i) The poverty ratio in Japan in 2010 (16.0%) was the sixth highest among the 34 member states of the OECD;

(ii) The poverty ratio of children in Japan in 2010 (15.7%) was the 10th highest among the 34 member states of the OECD;

(iii) The poverty ratio of active households with one or more child in Japan in 2010 (14.6%) was the 10th highest among the 34 member states of the OECD;

(iv) The poverty ratio of active households comprised of one or more child and two or more adults (12.7%) was the 11th highest among the 34 member states of the OECD;

(v) The poverty ratio of active households comprised of one or more child and only one adult in Japan in 2010 (50.8%) was the highest among the 34 member states of the OECD; and

(vi) All of the poverty ratios mentioned above are higher than the average of the OECD member states.

B. Specific Issues

a) Unemployment Rate

(i) Changes to the Complete Unemployment Rate39 and Jobs to Applicants Ratio

The overall unemployment rate had originally shown a decrease since 2003, but then increased rapidly after the financial crisis in 2008. In mid-2009, the rate once again began to decrease, reaching less than 4.0 percent in June 2013 for the first time in over four years. The rate further decreased to 3.6 percent in the first quarter of 2014.

36 An “active household” refers to a household headed by a person who is at least 18 years old, but younger than 65 years old. MHLW, http://www.mhlw.go.jp/toukei/saikin/hw/k-tyosa/k-tyosa13/dl/03.pdf.
39 The term “Completely Unemployed” refers to a person who (i) is not employed, (ii) is able to start working immediately as long as a job was offered, and (iii) has been looking for a job (based on the international standard set forth by the International Labor Organization (ILO)). The Complete Unemployment Ratio refers to the share of the Completely Unemployed among the population of the labor force (the number of workers (people who worked even a few hours in the final week of the month) and the Completely Unemployed). Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Statistics Bureau, http://www.stat.go.jp/data/roudou/qa-1.htm.
Another important employment measure, the jobs to applicant ratio, has been increasing since mid-2009, exceeding more than one in November 2013 for the first time in over six years. The jobs to applicant ratio reached 1.05 in the first quarter of 2014. Based on these measures, it can safely be concluded that employment conditions have generally improved since the financial crisis.

(ii) Polarization of the Unemployed (Increase in Long Period Unemployment)

On the other hand, the Long Period Unemployment Ratio has not exhibited the same decrease as in the Complete Unemployment Ratio. Instead, it has been hovering at a high percentage rate.

In addition, the share of the Long Period Unemployed among the total number of the Completely Unemployed increased significantly from 15.3 percent in 1992 to 33.7 percent in 2003. This figure remained almost unchanged between 2003 and 2010. The rate decreased slightly because the number of the Completely Unemployed increased due to the financial crisis in 2009. The rate, however, once again increased in 2010 and then again in 2011, reaching 38.4 percent in 2011.

The share of people who have not engaged in any job-seeking activities in a month tends to rise as the period of the unemployment grows longer.

b) Working Poor

The distribution of the annual income of full-time employees and part-time employees, excluding executives, indicates that the annual income of most of the part-time employees is less than JPY 5,000,000 in 2007, with many of part-time employees earning approximately JPY 2,000,000. This illustrates the disparity in incomes between full-time and part-time employees.

The change in distribution among part-time employees in the period from 1997 to 2002 and from 2002 to 2007 indicates an increase in the share of the part-time employees whose annual income is within the range of JPY 1,000,000 to 3,000,000 among all of part-time employees.

The number of full-time employees has tended to decrease since the mid-1990s, and accordingly the number of part-time employees has almost consistently increased. Therefore, the Part-Time Employment Ratio (the share of part-time employees among all employees) has consistently increased except during the first half of the 1990s.

The share of people who are working as part-time employees because they are unable to find full-time employment increased from 14.0 percent in 1994 to 22.5 percent in 2010. The share of contract workers now exceeds 30 percent, and the share of dispatch (temporary) workers exceeds 40 percent.

The Japan Survey Report published by the OECD points out the sizeable gap in the salaries of full-time and part-time employees, the lack of job training for part-time employees, and the limited mobility between full-time and part-time employment.

c) Poverty of Children

As mentioned above, the poverty ratio of children has almost consistently increased. In addition, as indicated in the Status of School Expense Subsidies for Elementary and Junior High School Students, the number of elementary and junior high school students who receive school

---

40 The term “Long Period Unemployment” refers to people who have been unemployed for one year or more. The Long Period Unemployed Ratio refers to the share of Long Period Unemployed among the population of the labor force. MHLW, Analysis of Labor Economy in 2012, http://www.mhlw.go.jp/wp/hakusyo/roudou/12/dl/02-1.pdf.


expense subsidies\textsuperscript{43} has consistently increased since 2001, reaching 15.64 percent in 2012, the highest rate since 2001.

The advancement rate in high schools for children living in families receiving public assistance, 89.5 percent, is approximately 10 percent lower than that of other families (98.2\%).\textsuperscript{44}

The Japan Survey Report of 2013 published by the OECD\textsuperscript{45} observes that the Japanese education system heavily relies upon \textit{Juku}, or private academies. In 2009, three out of four 15-year-old students went to \textit{Juku} for mathematics, which was the second highest ratio after Korea. The fee for \textit{Juku} imposes a substantial financial burden on households. The average expense for \textit{Juku} per student doubled between the period from 1985 to 2007, often as high as 11 percent of a person’s income.

C. Measures Actually Taken or Potentially to Be Taken

a) Public Assistance

(i) Criteria

Public assistance is provided when the amount of income is less than the minimum living expense\textsuperscript{46} specified by the Minister of the MHLW. The amount of assistance to be provided is the difference between the amount of income and the minimum living expense.

(ii) Types of Assistance\textsuperscript{47}

- Livelihood aid: living expense (\textit{e.g.}, meal expense, clothing expenditure, utility costs)
- housing subsidies: rent for apartment
- education subsidies: expense for school supplies necessary to receive mandatory education
- medical aid: expense for medical services
- nursing care subsidies: expense for nursing care
- delivery subsidies: expense for childbirth
- unemployment subsidies: expense required to acquire skills necessary to work
- funeral assistance: expense to hold funeral

(iii) Application for Public Assistance

An applicant files application for public assistance with the Welfare Office.\textsuperscript{48}

---

\textsuperscript{43} A “school expense subsidy” refers to the financial aid provided by local governments to parents or guardians of school-age children who are facing financial difficulty in receiving an education pursuant to article 9 of the School Education Act. Expense for school supplies, equipment for physical education, and other expenses are covered by this aid. Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology, \url{http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/career/05010502/017.htm}.

\textsuperscript{44} MHLW, \url{http://www.mhlw.go.jp/wp/yosan/yosan12syokan/dl/saisei_youbou_27.pdf}.

\textsuperscript{45} OECD, \url{http://www.oecd.org/eco/surveys/Overview%20Japan%20in%20Japanese.pdf}.

\textsuperscript{46} “Minimum living expense” refers to the sum of the eight types of assistance (\textit{i.e.}, livelihood aid, housing subsidies, education subsidies, medical aid, nursing care subsidies, delivery subsidies, unemployment subsidies, and funeral assistance). MHLW, \url{http://www.mhlw.go.jp/bunya/seikatsu/hogo/seikatuhogo03.pdf}.

\textsuperscript{47} MHLW, \url{http://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/seisakunitsuite/bunya/hukushi_kaijo/seikatsuhogo/seikatuhogo/}.

\textsuperscript{48} MHLW, \url{http://www.mhlw.go.jp/bunya/seikatsu/hogo/fukusimusyo-ichiran.html}. 
After filing the application, in deciding whether the public assistance should be provided or not, many factors are considered. These factors include the applicant’s current living environment (checked through home visit), bank deposits, insurance, assets (e.g., real estate), possibility of support by someone other than a person who has duty to support the applicant, social security benefits (e.g., pension), employment income, and the ability to work. The amount of the public assistance is determined based on the result of such investigation.

(iv) Procedure After Decision of Issuance

A recipient of public assistance has an obligation to report his or her income monthly. In addition, depending on the actual status of the household, caseworkers of the Welfare Office conduct home visits several times a year.

(v) Record

The number of people and households who receive public assistance has typically been increasing since 1995. Furthermore, due to the financial crisis in 2008, the number of recipients of public assistance reached 2,164,909 people and 1,611,953 households as of September 2014, the largest number in its history.49

Records on the classification of households receiving public assistance indicates that an increase in the number of elderly households is the primary reason for the aggregate increase. A comparison of 2013 and 2003 indicates that the number of “other households,” which includes households of several working generations, receiving public assistance increased three-fold from 84,941 to 288,019. Therefore, it can be reasonably concluded that the increase in the numbers of unemployed or low-income persons has contributed to the increase in the number of households receiving public assistance.50

b) Independence Assistance Project51

As of April 2015, pursuant to article 4 of the Act on Assistance of Independence of Necessitous People, local governments or private sector organizations delegated by the local government must take the following steps to enable the independence of “necessitous people” (defined as those who are facing financial difficulties and are likely to fail to maintain the minimum standard of living)52 before such persons require public assistance:

(i) Assess and analyze the problems of necessitous people to understand their needs;

(ii) Formulate an independence assistance plan to continuously provide support meeting the identified needs; and

(iii) Communicate with relevant organizations so that the independence assistance plan is implemented comprehensively.

The necessitous people will receive the assistance discussed below based on the independence assistance plan formulated in the independence assistance project.

52 Article 2, section 1 of the Act of Assistance of Independence of Necessitous People.
c) Housing Support

Since October 2009, subsidies for housing have been provided on the following conditions pursuant to article 5 of the Act on Assistance of Independence of Necessitous People.

Eligibility:

A person under the age of 65 who became unemployed within 2 years and either (i) does not have a residence, or (ii) is likely to lose his or her current residence.

Requirements (in the 23 wards of Tokyo):

(i) income: less than JPY 138,000 for households with one member and less than JPY 172,000 for households with two members;
(ii) assets: less than JPY 500,000 for households with one member and less than JPY 1,000,000 for households with two members; and
(iii) job search activities: consultation regarding job search status more than twice a month at the public job placement office, interview at the local government more than four times a month, etc.

Maximum Amount (in the 23 wards of Tokyo):

JPY 53,000 for households with one member and JPY 69,800 for households with more than two members.

Period:

Generally, three months. If the recipient is prudently engaged in job search activities, however, the period can be extended for three additional months (but no more than nine months in total).

In 2012, the employment rate among the recipients of the housing support subsidies was 58.5 percent.

d) Assistance With Job Searches

Each local government provides a wide variety of assistance with job searches. As of April 2015, pursuant to the Act on Assistance of Independence of Necessitous People, depending on the circumstances surrounding the reason for the unemployment, the following job search assistance is comprehensively provided nationwide:

(i) People who can begin working immediately through general job placement services

The job placement office will provide general services.

(ii) People who are ready to work to a certain extent and can begin working immediately or within a reasonable period of time by individual consultation

Career consulting, advice on how to write a resume, introduction of job opportunities meeting the person’s actual needs, development of individual employment offers, and follow-up support after being hired.

---


(iii) People who require a flexible work schedule prior to commencement of a permanent job

Job opportunities with assistance and training programs will be provided. In addition to light duty work (e.g., cleaning, recycling, or agricultural work), based on the specific job assistance program, job support officers will provide support in obtaining a permanent job.

(iv) People who are not ready to work

As a part of the job search assistance program, assistance with basic competence in preparation for job searching will be provided in a planned and consistent way (in the model project conducted by Yokohama City, 60.4 percent of the participants gained a job during the period from October 2011 to March 2012).

e) Urgent Support\textsuperscript{56}

Since 2008, under certain conditions, sleeping facilities, clothes, or food are provided to those who do not have a residence and whose income is below a specified threshold through the Project for Homeless Under Urgent Circumstances (pursuant to article 6 of the Act on Assistance of Independence of Necessitous People from April 2015).

Outline of the Assistance:

(i) Assistance for daily life or health (providing sleeping facilities where the person can temporarily stay to prevent a health condition from becoming worse and conducting medical check-ups in collaboration with a public healthcare center as necessary);

(ii) Assistance with employment (providing job-related information and encouraging those who want to work to use the Homeless Independence Support Center where customized assistance is provided as necessary to each individual); and

(iii) Other assistance such as providing consultation or guidance to those who need social welfare services to enable them to receive assistance from the welfare offices.

Fee:

Free of charge

Period:

Generally, within three months

f) Assistance to Reinstate Household Budget\textsuperscript{57}

As of April 2015, pursuant to article 6 of the Act on Assistance of Independence of Necessitous People, local governments or private sector organizations delegated by the local government must take the following steps to enable necessitous people to improve their household budgets as well as their competence to manage such budgets and achieve a stable, independent life:


\textsuperscript{57} See also Japan Research Institute, Guidance on Operation of Necessitous People Assistance Projects, http://www.jri.co.jp/MediaLibrary/file/column/study/pdf/77380.pdf.
Assessment and analysis of issues with household budgets and formulation of an assistance plan based on the specific circumstance surrounding each individual;

Customized consultation to reinstate the household budget of necessitous people (including through the use of public services);

If necessary, assistance through the Japan Legal Support Center (Houterasu); and

If necessary, assistance with obtaining a loan.

Until the end of 2011, as model projects, several consumers’ cooperative societies (Green Co-op Fukuoka, Green Co-op Kumamoto, Green Co-op Ohita, and Green Co-op Nagasaki) provided loans to necessitous people, and the share of the amount not collected among all of the charge-offs was only 0.97 percent of the total loan amounts extended (approximately JPY 5,600,000).

**g) Assistance to Children**

In June 2013, the Act to Promote Measures to Resolve Children’s Poverty Problems was passed and came into force in January 2014. Pursuant to the Act, on August 29, 2014, the Framework Concerning Measures Against Children’s Poverty was introduced. Below are the primary projects to be conducted based on the Framework.58

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Field</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Improvement of education at schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collaboration with social welfare organizations (increase in the number of social workers at school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improvement of collaboration with NPO or free schools which provide educational or living support to children facing educational problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promotion of system to prevent high school dropouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provision of child education without charge to households with low incomes and the improvement of the quality of child education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enhancement of support for school attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increase amount of scholarships granted to high school students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enhancement of support to mentally or physically challenged students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promotion of non-interest-bearing scholarships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Promotion of exemption from or reduction in tuition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enhancement of support for afterschool study programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of a student-to-student consultation network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of establishment of night junior high schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsidies for education under a public assistance system, and use of school attendance assistance system to ensure food safety and better nutrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For children in foster homes, provision of a wide variety of services to empower children and improve the quality of life in national youth education facilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daily Life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensure stability of childcare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home visit to households with infants to evaluate medical conditions of parents and children and provision of healthcare-related information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional and continuous lifestyle guidance for single-mother households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance with job searches for children who have left foster homes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietary education as part of medical checkups for infants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational assistance for single-parent and needy households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of collaboration between specialists with expertise in single-mother households, employment or labor, and/or education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance with job searches for children in single-parent households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance for children without parents with job searches via public job placement offices, especially for full-time employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active development of job offers for students in evening high schools and assistance with job searches via public job placement offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved communication and collaboration among schools, public job placement offices, special institutes supporting unemployed youth in order to provide immediate job search</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
D. Future Issues Surrounding Poverty

a) Polarization of Unemployed (Increase in Long-term Unemployment)

Public assistance has played a substantial role in terms of securing income for the unemployed. The share of the unemployed who have not engaged in any job search activities in the prior month tends to be higher among those whose unemployment period is longer. This means that people tend to become less active in job searching when the unemployment period becomes longer, and as a result, the unemployment period itself becomes longer.

This tendency can be resolved by planned and consistent support for not only job searches but also establishment of basic competence in preparation for job searching. For such support to produce results, it is important to widely publicize the assistance projects, especially among those who have been unemployed for a longer period.

b) “Working Poor” (Poverty of Workers)

Public assistance has also played a substantial role in terms of securing income even for the employed. As mentioned above, the number of “other households,” which includes households of several working generations, receiving public assistance in 2013 is more than three times the number in 2003. This increase is rooted in the increase of low income earners among part-time employees. To resolve the income disparity between full-time and part-time employees, it is necessary to incentivize employers to offer similar employment conditions to both full-time and part-time employees and/or convert part-time employees into full-time employees.

c) Poverty of Children
Due to the lack of specific numeric targets and its expansive scope, it is uncertain how effective the Framework Concerning Measures Against Children’s Poverty will be in meeting its objectives. Furthermore, many of the measures prescribed in the Framework rely on the private sector, and thus the private sector will continue to play an important role in reducing the poverty rate among children.