





Awareness-raising activities on gender roles are among such measures. A recent poll shows that more than half of the respondents were against the notion of “husbands as breadwinners and wives as caregivers”. Thus, people’s perceptions are changing.

Unfortunately, however, unequal gender division of responsibilities continues to exist. In Japan, data shows that women spend seven times longer time than men per day for domestic work, although the difference is on the decrease. Also, with regard to caregiving to the family members, roughly 80% is on women’s shoulders in terms of total hours spent. Equal

sharing of responsibilities is also essential in coping with the problem of declining fertility and aging of our society. At the end of 2007, the “Council of Public and Private Sectors to Promote Work-Life Balance” consisting of relevant ministers and representatives of business community, labor circle and local governments decided on Charter for Work-Life Balance and the Action Policy for Promoting Work-Life Balance. The Action Policy contains specific

numerical targets including on time to be spent for child-raising and housework by men who have children under age 6. The government, in partnership with the private sector, is going to

