

4 The Basic Program for Persons with Disabilities and the Five-year Plan for the Implementation of Priority Measures

Article 9 of the Basic Law for Persons with Disabilities mandates the establishment of a basic program regarding policies for persons with disabilities, so as to promote measures concerning the prevention of disabilities and measures concerning the welfare of persons with disabilities in a comprehensive and organized manner.

The presently active Basic Program was established by Cabinet decision in December of 2002 with the duration of ten years from 2003 to 2012. While building on the concepts of former long-term plans such as "normalization" or "rehabilitation" and the concept of a "Cohesive Society"—one in which everyone respects and supports the personality and individuality of others—this plan establishes the basic direction of measures for persons with disabilities during the plan period. It aims for the realization of a society where persons with disabilities can take part and participate in all sorts of activities based on their own choices and free will, and where the rights of persons with disabilities are respected as those of equally constitutive members of society.

Now, in chapter IV of the Basic Program ("Developmental Structure, etc.") it is stated that "so as to steadily promote the different measures based on the Basic Program, there needs to be a plan to enforce key measures, i.e. measures establishing concrete objectives and deadlines." Based upon this, the Five-year Plan for the Implementation of Priority Measures was established.

In December of 2007, following the deliberations of the "Central Council for Promoting Measures for Persons with Disabilities" and the consideration of the opinions of a total of 120 organizations and individuals—including persons with disabilities, their families, related organizations and scholars—the Second-Half Five-Year Program corresponding to the second half of the Basic Program (fiscal years 2008-2012) was established.

The Second-Half Five-Year Program adheres to the concepts of independence and symbiosis and, in order to truly contribute to the realization of a "Cohesive Society," does the following:

- ① Gives comprehensive, user-focused and gap-free support at every step of the life cycle of persons with disabilities, support adapted to the specificities of different disabilities, be they physical, intellectual, psychiatric or developmental, with the basic goal of granting them an independent life where they live;
- ② Promotes the establishment of a life environment that takes into consideration "universal design," easily accessible to all, so as to remove obstacles to participation in society and independence in the areas where persons with disabilities live, and to promote the practical

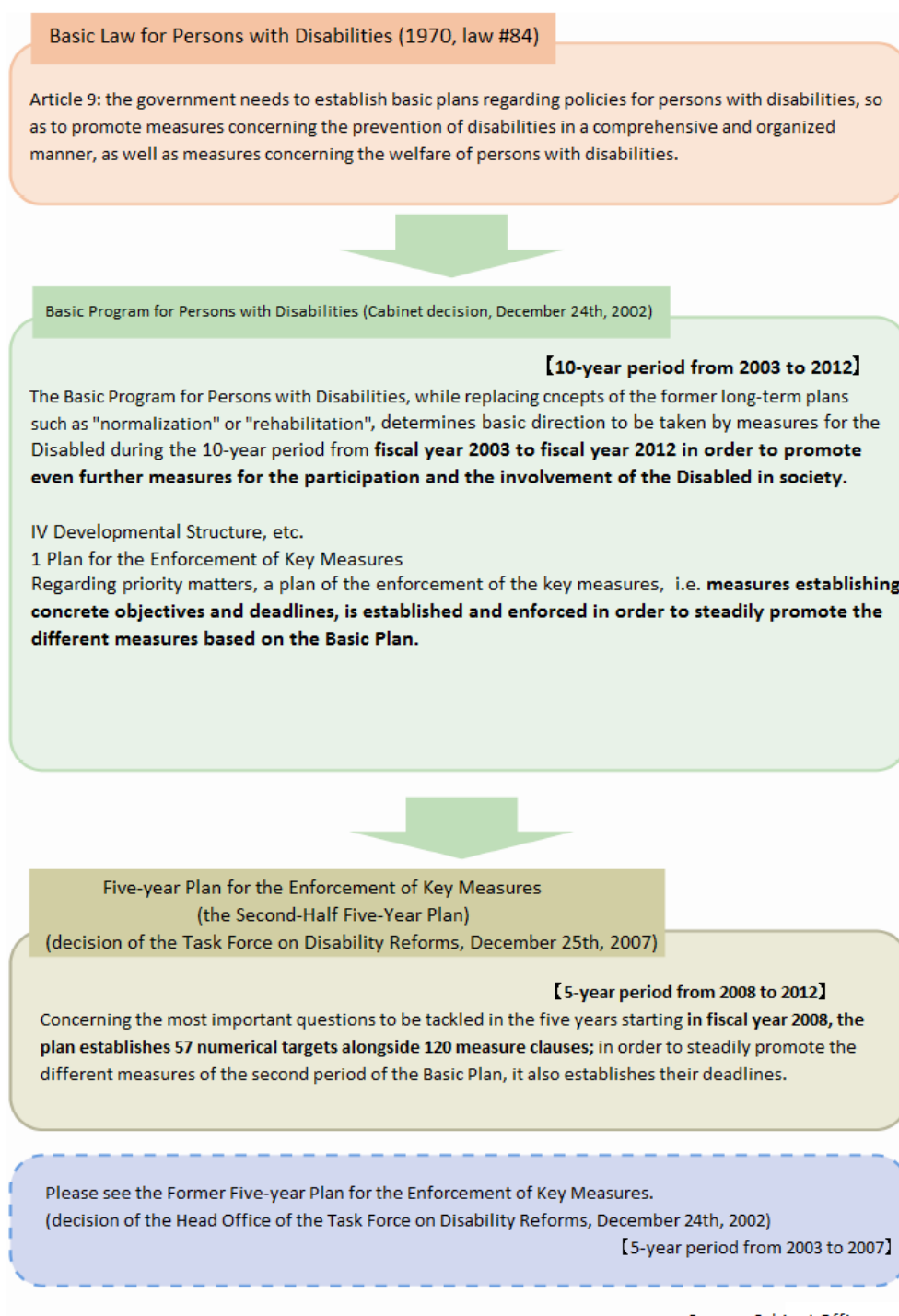
use of IT (information technologies) to supply comprehensive information to persons with disabilities;

③ Investigates the fundamental revision of the Services and Supports for Persons with Disabilities Act and the necessary revisions of the plan based on its results, and

④ Promotes the development of disability measures, emphasizing the four points that promote the establishment of necessary civil laws in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as soon as possible; concerning the most important questions to be tackled in the five years starting in fiscal 2008, the plan establishes 57 numerical targets, including 42 new regulation clauses alongside 120 measure clauses. It also establishes deadlines for their completion.

A progress report of the Second-Half Five-Year Program is announced roughly every fiscal year by the "Central Council for Promoting Measures for Disabled".

■ Chart 5 Structure of the Five-year Plan for the Enforcement of Key Measures (Fiscal 2008 to 2012] (Decision of the Task Force for Disability Reforms, December 25th, 2007)



Source: Cabinet Office