Measures for declining birthrate depending on the areas

The cause of declining birthrate is considered to differ depending on the area such as urban area and the country. We should take measures depending on the current circumstance of the areas to promote the measures effectively.

Project for realizing a society where dreams such as giving birth are fulfilled (Yamaguchi prefecture and Kyushu region)

There are some features on declining population in Yamaguchi prefecture and Kyushu region as follows: Å The total fertility rate is high as a whole; Ç Migration survey shows that the half of the people stay in the same area at the time of migration. Kyushu Strategy Council consisting of the governors of Kyushu zone and representatives of business association adopted “Regeneration of local area, Kyushu Declaration” in November 2014. This declaration announces that Kyushu zone will lead Japan regeneration. There were 4 project teams in the council shown below: “creating work places”; “creating excellent environment for education” ; “achieving a society where wishes such as giving birth are fulfilled”; “creating a safe and secure living environment.” 18 projects were shown as “Kyushu Regeneration Action Plan” in October 2015.

The governor became pregnant campaign panel

There are various contents in the project. Here, we introduce a project, “achieving a society where wishes such as giving birth are fulfilled”, which take measures for declining birthrate. According to basic survey on social living in 2011, males in Yamaguchi prefecture and Kyushu region spent less time for household than national average. Wives spent about 7 times longer hours for household than husbands. Many people living in this area responded that “wives mainly played a role in rearing children.” It showed that there was stereotype about the division of roles between men and women.

So, this project tried to arise awareness of work-life balance to change this current situation. The governor of Yamaguchi prefecture and representatives of business association implemented “Proposal for local Male Day (danday)” in fall 2015 for promotion of creating work places friendly to childrearing. This proposal was an event as one of “Kyushu/Yamaguchi Work-Life Balance Promotion Campaign”. Each prefecture implemented public awareness activity such as Work and Life Balance Promotion Seminar in fall 2016, and created movies for arising this awareness.

The titles of the movies were “the governor became pregnant,” “I’m sorry, bento,” and “NO overwork directive.” In “governor became pregnant,” three governors wore pregnant jackets (7.3 kg of the weight; equivalent to the 7th month of pregnancy) and they actually experienced how hard the pregnant was. Not only domestic mass media broadcasted the movie but also 49 sites in 16 countries put it on the Internet. The number of reproduction was over 35 million in March 2018. This movie recieved a great response, and got a prize of “the Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications Award/ACC Award” at “ACC TOKYO CREATIVITY AWARDS 2017.” It was the first time for local entities to receive the award.

By not only promoting activities through the use of movies, but also distributing books/leaflets about excellent practices, this project continues to promote work-life balance in Kyushu/Yamaguchi as a promotion activity.

Support for eliminating “rearing children alone” due to house-moving (Kyoto prefecture)

NPO, “Network for women that desire to work”, started supporting business by visiting home in 2004. This business has supported a woman raising her children alone, because she moved to an unfamiliar area due to marriage and had no chance to connect the persons with whom she could consult her troubles.

This NPO has paid attention to “house-moving” as a chance to have connection between a family rearing children and the community. In 2009, the NPO started a trial business, “house-moving business for families rearing children”, in Uji city, and has supported house-moving of young families that would rear children, the pregnant, and families rearing children from another area to Kyoto prefecture. But it was impossible for one NPO to cover all the areas in Kyoto. So, after receiving
subsidy from Kyoto, the NPO investigated collaboration with other NPOs in Kyoto, partnership with movement promotion business, and effective notification method of this business in 2016. The NPO aimed at making the areas “Kyoto where has been friendly to childrearing since house-moving”, and checked resources of supporters and the needs of the persons that demanded support in order to receive the same level of supports when they moved.

As a result, the NPO found the other NPO which has already implemented visiting support by collaborating with local entities in Nantan area and intended to take actions for the business. This NPO started “house-moving supporting business for families rearing children” in Nantan area in collaboration with the other one.

This NPO implemented visiting supporting business as a Kyoto subsidy business in 2017. It implemented supports 3 times for 3 families that felt uncertain on childrearing respectively when they moved, in collaboration with several NPOs.

As for a family that moved from another city, the wife stayed home during the day after giving birth, because her husband was a self-business owner and she helped her husband. She had no idea of the institutions to consult her trouble about childrearing and had no one to consult with. Then, based on “house-moving supporting business for families rearing children”, the staff of the NPO helped her cradle her baby, go to the salon for rearing children together, and make friends in the community. The staff did not rear her child instead of her but helped her behave herself and solve her troubles.

As a result, the wife went to the salon for rearing children and an event held in the community for herself after the support. She was able to live in the community with confidence.

This NPO introduced this business to the persons that desired movement in collaboration with the movement promotion section of the local entities in the area. It also requested real estate agent in the area to distribute leaflets to families rearing children when they investigated movement to notify this business.

This NPO investigates business expansion to all the areas in Kyoto in collaboration with Kyoto prefecture based on the result in 2017. It also investigate to connect this business with promotion of employment of women as well as childrearing in partnership with promotion business of movement that is implemented by local entities.