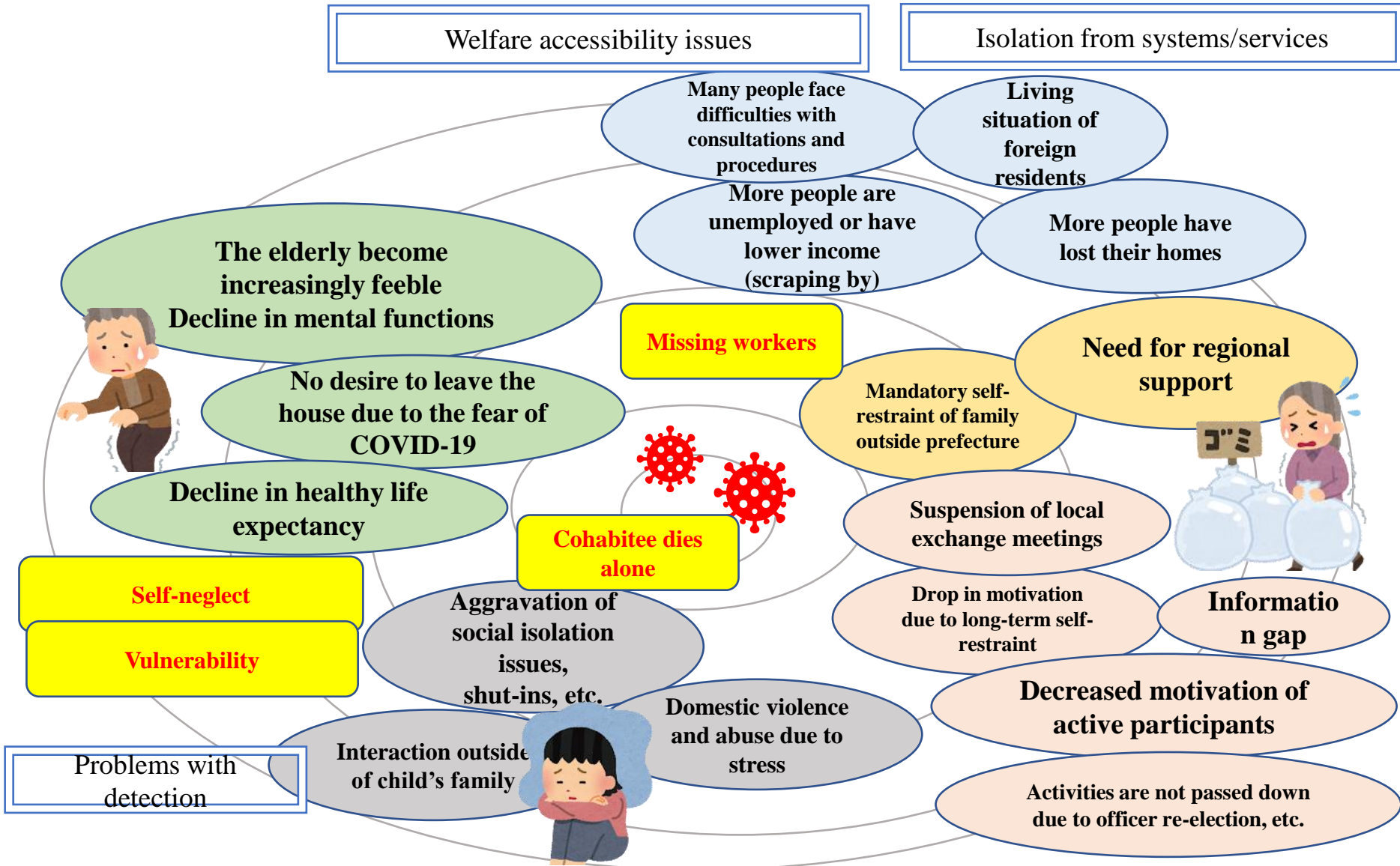


# Development of Community Social Work During the COVID-19 pandemic



**Mizuhoku Shakai Fukushi Kyogikai  
Secretary-General Yoshinori Hirasaka  
(Licensed social worker, mental health welfare  
profession, and licensed care worker)**

# Regional Issues that Have Newly Arisen During COVID-19



# Situation in Mizuho

As of April 1, 2022

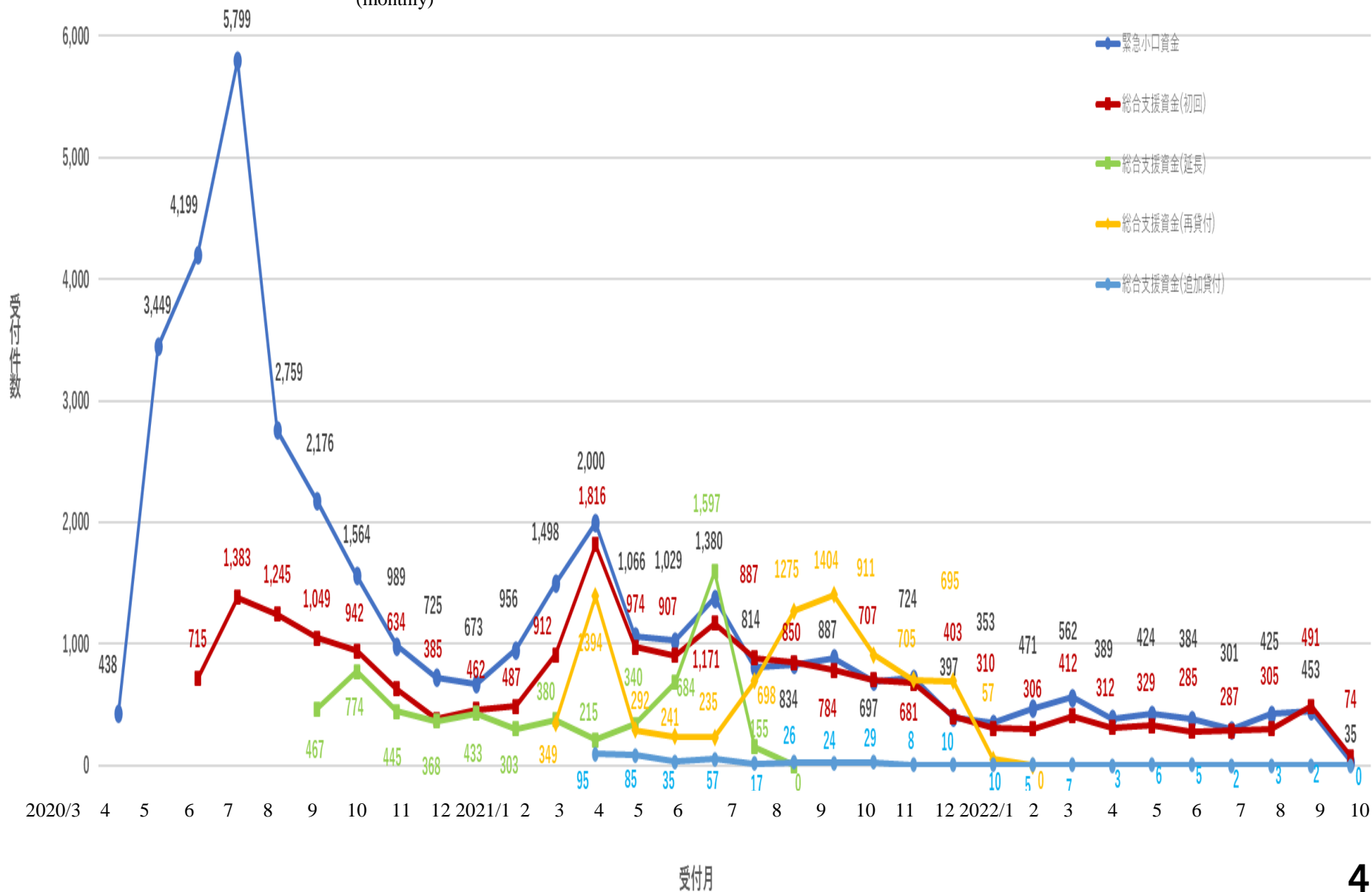
Item	Number *Figures in parentheses are for Nagoya city
Population	107,387 (2,317,985)
Population aged 65 years or over	28,523 (573,460)
Rate of aging	26.6% (25.1%)
Elderly people living alone	5,218 (107,934)
Households comprising only elderly people (75 y.o. or above)	1,430 households (29,641 households)
Nursing care ratio, etc.	20.9% (20.1%)
Physical disability certificate holders	3,561
Rehabilitation certificate holders	790
Persons with mental disabilities	1,294
① Protected households, ② no. of protected persons, and ③ rate of protection	① 1,369 households (38,428 households), ② 1,607 (46,790 households), and ③ 1.49% (2.01%)
No. of applications for COVID-19 special loans/loan amount (March 25, 2020–October 31, 2022)	2,516 (55,856: 7,194,733,000 JPY)

# Livelihood Welfare Fund: Number of Applications for Special Loans Received by the Ward Welfare Council

生活福祉資金特別貸付 区社協申込受付件数(月別)

Special loan for livelihood welfare payments (monthly)

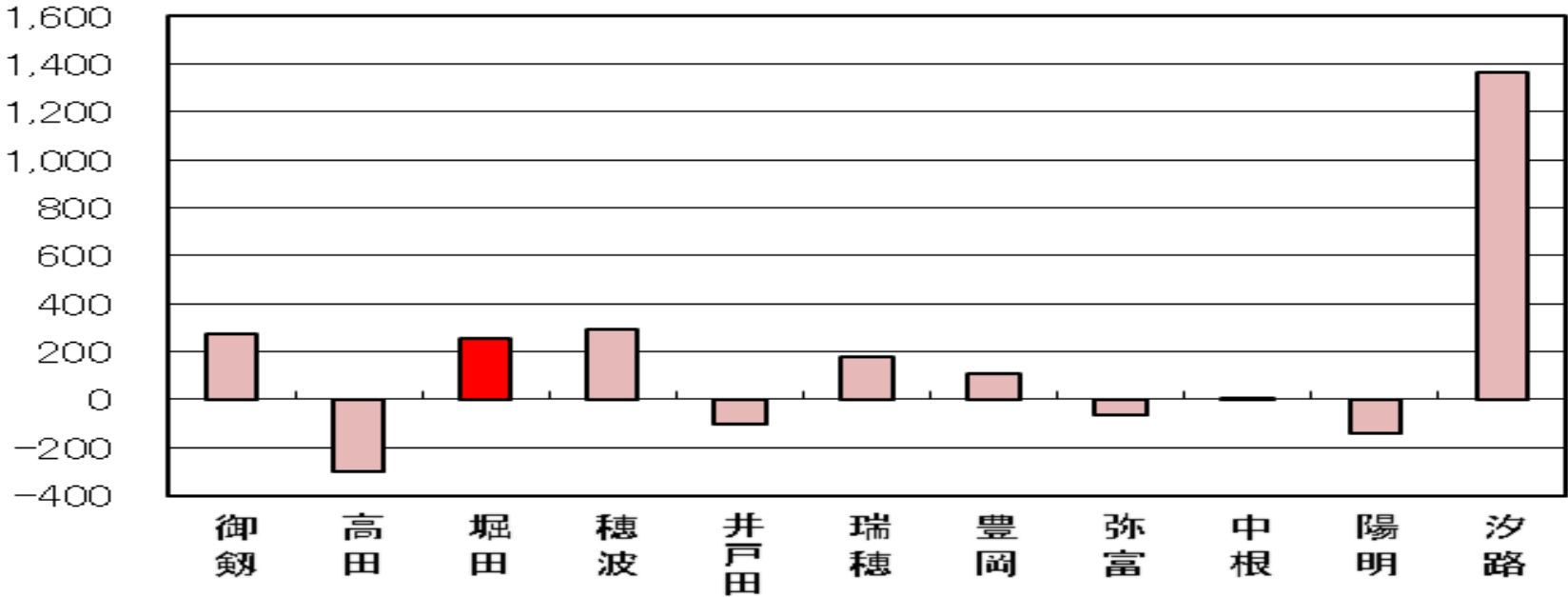
Number of applications to Social Welfare Council



# Situation in Mizuho Ward

Number of Increase  
(Person)

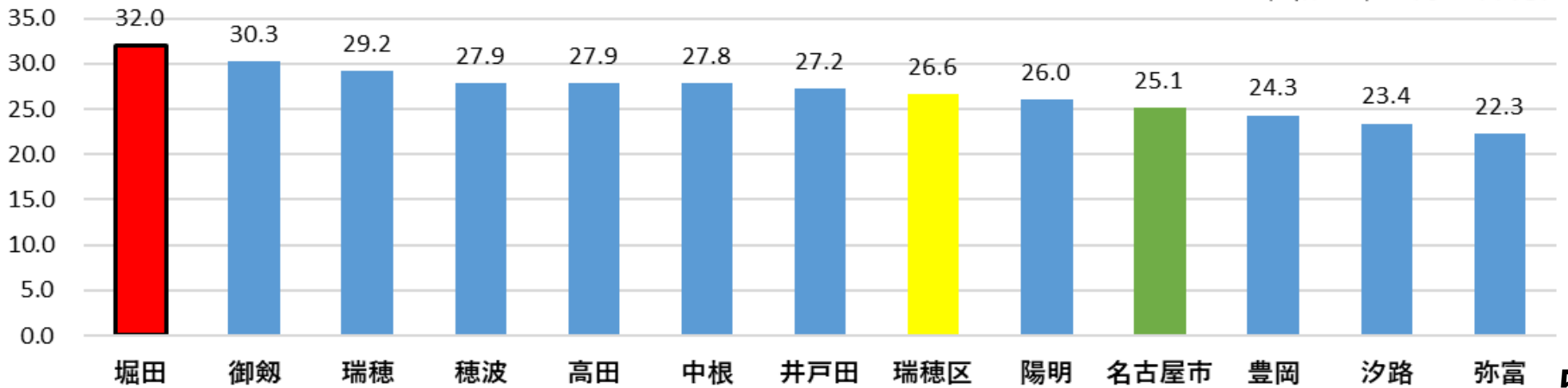
Population Growth by School District (Comparison between October 1, 2021, and October 1, 2016)



Aging Rate by School District

Outline of welfare in Mizuho Ward in  
FY 2022 as of April 1, 2022

令和4年4月1日現在





# Increase in elderly people dying alone (social isolation)

## ■ Structural analysis of the background and characteristics of the elderly dying alone

○ Medical aspects: Decline in physical functions due to aging, limited interaction with family and society, and loss of experience

⇒ Undeniably increased risk of pneumonia, stroke, and heart attack

○ Social aspects: Few opportunities for social participation and a lack of social contact ⇒ Isolation from roles in society

○ Life issues: High risk of social isolation among the poor/Households of elderly people with low incomes tend to be isolated.

\*The elderly die alone due to a combination of these factors based on social isolation.

## ■ Characteristics of regional communities

○ During the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a rapid increase in the elderly dying alone in all urban areas

\*Mizuho Ward Welfare Council findings: 10 cases, of which 1 was of cohabiting but dying alone (April 2022–January 2023)

Background: Isolation from the local community, deteriorating familial relations, localized aging population, and isolation from groups and communities

## ■ Preventing the elderly from dying alone

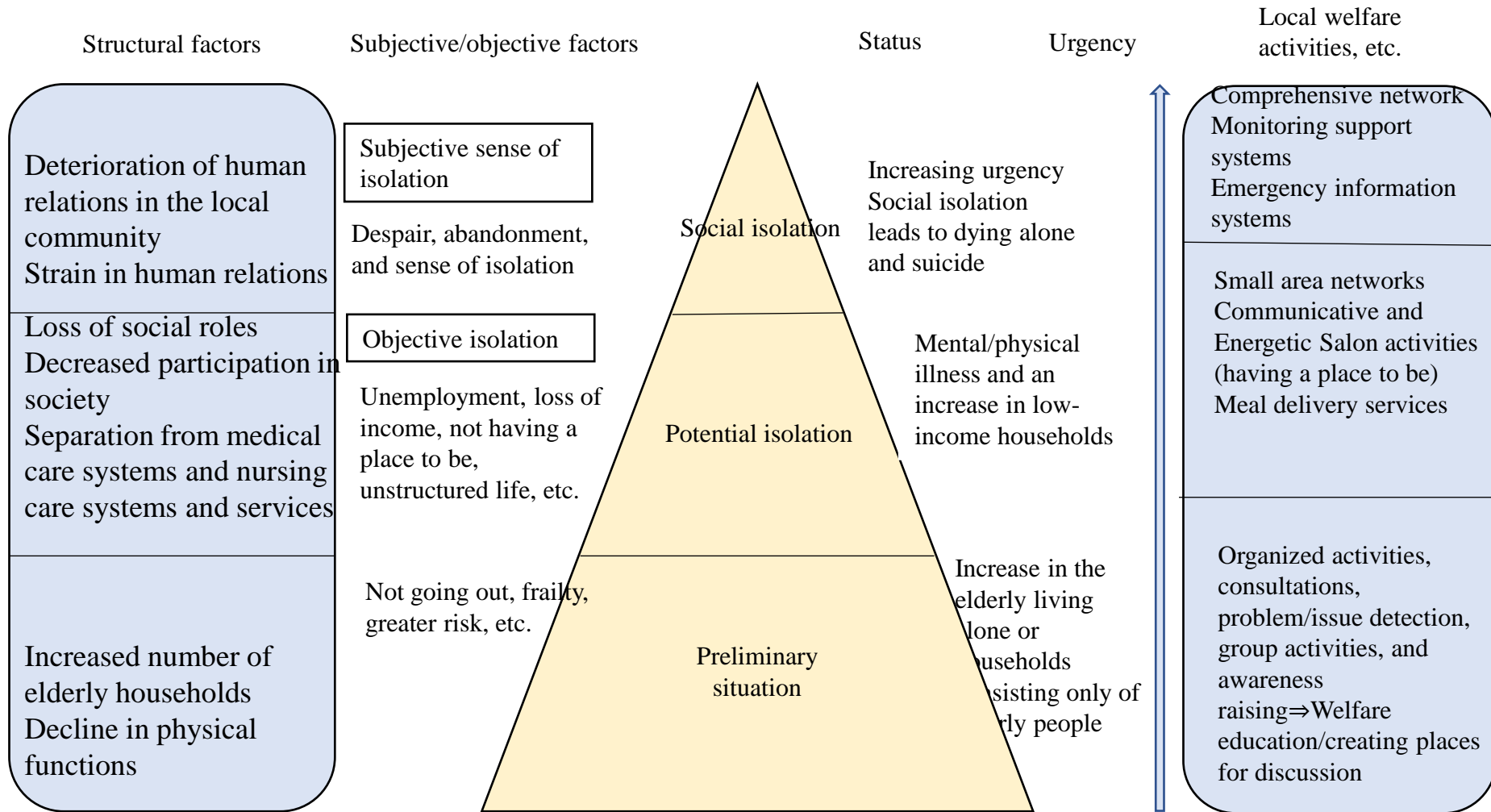
○ Small-scale welfare network projects: Promoting the formation of social support networks can significantly impact the early detection and emergency response to solitary deaths.

○ There is a recognized efficacy of preventive functions through health checks and safety confirmations for the elderly through meal and newspaper delivery services and of social welfare functions in terms of Communicative and Energetic Salon activities. Local welfare activities play a definite role in terms of preventive functions.

○ Isolation from information and systems/services leads to self-neglect and is connected to vulnerability, etc. It is important to provide support for personal and regional resilience.



# Connection between social isolation and local welfare activities





# “Connections” in Mizuho Ward

Yatomi School Area Comprehensive Support System Council (trial)



Life support activities



Having a place to be



Life support activities

Some regions have initiatives for shopping and activities for transport support (volunteers) help with minor “worries” (regional support project in six school areas)

Monitoring activities

Monitoring activities for “people of concern” (contact network)

Creation of support map (school area)



Having a place to be

Creating places to be, including Communicative and Energetic Salons, children’s diners, and other places for different purposes in 110 locations

Visible connection

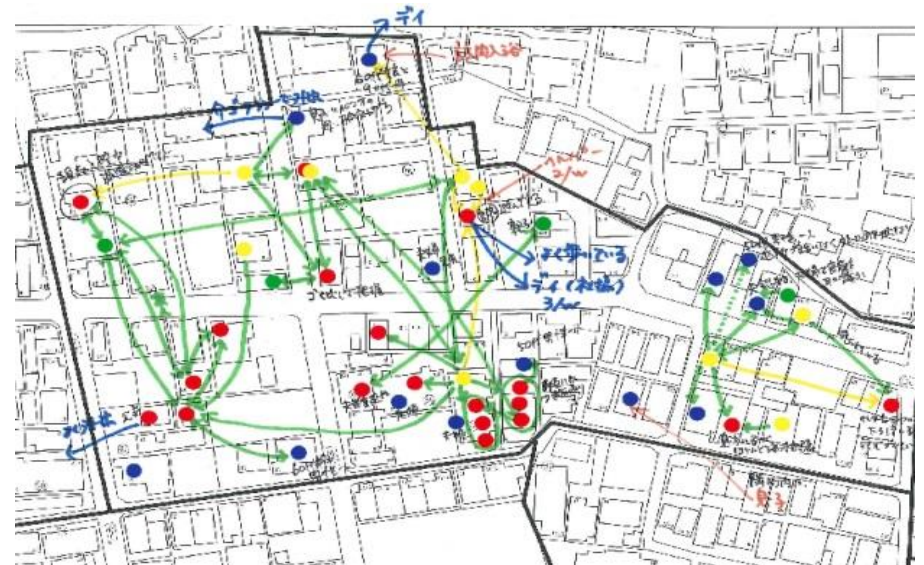
Small considerations in daily life

Contact food delivery in nine school areas



# Local support map

Within the scope of neighborhood associations, a map is developed for people who require support, including monitoring, and by connecting with people who offer monitoring, local connectivity and support can be clearly visualized.



The map is updated annually to share information and issues that have been discovered, which helps with contact network activities (monitoring activities).

## Characteristics of consultations from “8050 and other households” (April–December 2017: 32 households)

### 1 Parent–child aging

- Households where parents are 80 years or above and children are 50 years or above: 18 (56%)
- Households where parents are 60–70 years or above and children are 30–40 years or above: 14 (44%) ⇒ Concerns regarding increase in dying alone despite cohabitation during COVID-19

### 2 Increased number of middle- and old-aged long-term shut-ins

- Living off parents’ pension due to the children quitting their jobs to provide nursing care, etc.
- Consultations from related agencies: 17 households (approx. 53%)
  - \*Concerns about missing workers
- Children become shut-ins or have no fixed employment.
  - Consultations from parents: 9 households (approx. 28%)

### 3 Issues after parents’ death

- Concerns about the children becoming elderly but without any pension
- Anxiety about becoming trapped due to the end of earnings





June 2, 2018 Broadcast NHK TV

NHK Special Missing Workers: Giving up work

\*Independent support agency for persons in need (work and life support center in Kaneyama)



### ○Missing Workers

Someone who quit work to provide nursing care for parents, etc., but has given up working thereafter. The unemployed are those who are looking for work through Hello Work and other agencies, whereas those who do not want to work and who are not looking for work have disappeared from the labor market and are not included in the statistics. Such people are called missing workers.

I want to work but I can't

I want to find my ideal place

Struggling with life

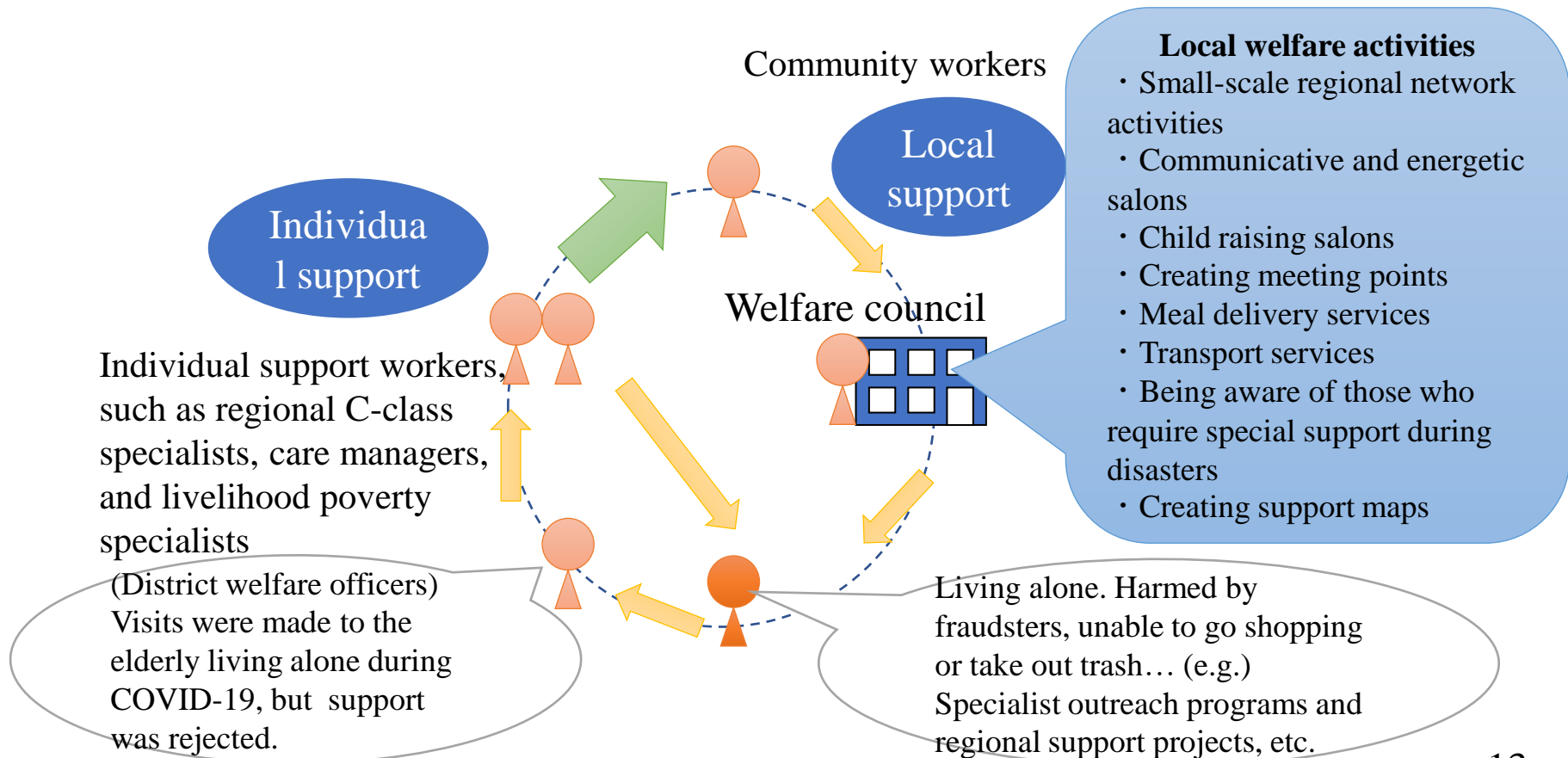
8050 and other household issues

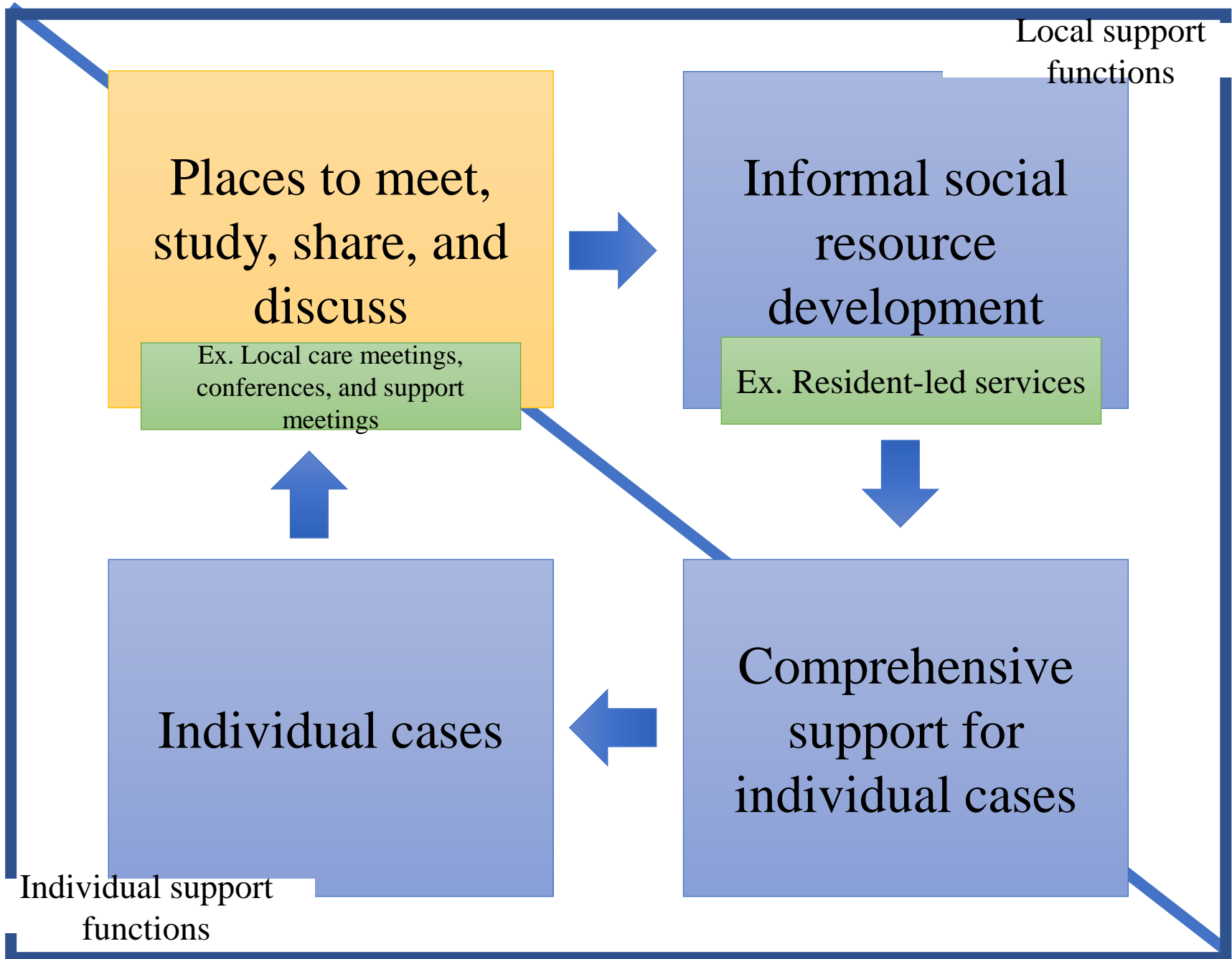
Quit job to care for family



# Developing from individual support to local support

○ If it is difficult for one worker to play two roles, there is a clear issue as to what should be done to have a cycle within the region from individual to local support.





# Toward a Sustainable Situation (Sustainability)



○ Awareness of local communities and the sustainable development goal of “leaving no one behind”

Initiatives should be established for **new connections to give a form to feelings by promoting connections and support in the region so that no one is left behind or isolated even if it is not possible to meet.**

**\*Show your face, together with local people who value you**

○ Baby clothes donated by companies that deal with goods for babies are distributed to ward facilities and child welfare centers (in the city)⇒Far-reaching networks were formed with medical facilities, NPOs, children’s facilities and related agencies. Today, it is being promoted in connection to social contribution activities by the business.

\*Comprehensive cooperation agreement signed between Mizuho Ward Welfare Council and Brother (April 2022)

○In terms of support for achieving an inclusive regional society, consultation support (multi-agency consultations), participation support, and regional formation, cooperation among diverse regional social resources is important. Specialists (Welfare Council members)

have a thorough understanding of local citizens’ desire to **make connections.**

The aim is to be a Welfare Council (specialist agency) that can support these connections.

○ “Elbowroom” and “Weaving Together”

=Specialist agencies, local residents (promotion groups, etc.), and district welfare officers collaborate to talk about what the local community can do and to fill in the gaps of what cannot be done through cooperation.

地域共生社会の実現に向けて相補的な連携を強化！  
名古屋市瑞穂区社会福祉協議会と包括連携協定を締結

ブザー工業株式会社（社長：佐々木一朗）の国内販売子会社であるブザー販売株式会社（社長：三島剛）は、社会福祉法人 名古屋瑞穂区社会福祉協議会（会長：浅井優子）と地域共生社会の実現に向けて包括連携協定を締結し、4月26日にブザーミュージアムで締結式を行いました。





## Future Issues

- Preventive support through early detection and resolution and creating structures for small area general consultations are important for outreach.
- Need for increasing **local citizen autonomy to create a region without social isolation and exclusion**
- The perspective of promoting **social work in the region in terms of changing the region based on one example is important.**

## As Social Workers

### **The importance of the perspective of social work**

- Focusing on connectivity, rather than only having an approach limited to individuals, to create awareness regarding an approach that connects all individuals in the community
- Regardless of age, location, details, or area, it is necessary to be familiar with the difficulties and needs in all areas of life to consider the details of support and provide joint consideration to “parallel support.”
- Order of priorities: ① what the individual can do and ② temporary and transient support from social workers if there is no close family, supporter, specialist, or caregiver. However, people’s diverse lives cannot be supported by one agency or specialist.
- Put ① and ② in order, and if there are no resources (people, services, or structures), find them or make them.
- In trans-border regional welfare practice, it is necessary to adopt a perspective about not only your own business but also **the entirety of local welfare services to cooperate with others for regional formation.**