

JICA Senior Vice President Speaks at CSIS Event on “Addressing an Aging Population through Digital Transformation in the Western Hemisphere”

On March 11, at a virtual event hosted by the Washington, D.C.-based Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), JICA Senior Vice President for Latin America and the Caribbean, human development, economic development, and domestic partnership strategy and management Ms. Imoto Sachiko highlighted JICA’s commitment to working with its partners in the LAC region to address challenges stemming from population aging.

The event focused on how digital technologies can help countries in LAC keep up with emerging demographic shifts and ensure aging populations live dignified and properly supported lives. In particular, it delved into some of the key findings and recommendations provided in CSIS’s policy brief for [“Addressing an Aging Population through Digital Transformation in the Western Hemisphere,”](#) the latest research collaboration between CSIS and JICA.



*JICA Senior Vice President Imoto Sachiko
delivering introductory remarks at the event*

In her introductory remarks, Ms. Imoto spoke about population aging as an opportunity to transform societies so that people of all ages can thrive in harmony and mutual collaboration. In this context, she shared how Japan itself has been adapting to prevailing demographic trends. Specifically, Ms. Imoto cited the Long-Term Care Insurance that Japan introduced in the year 2000, which ensures that care for the older persons is no longer offered by families alone but by society as a whole. She also alluded to the growing prominence of Community-based Integrated Care in Japan, which is based on the concept of Aging in Place, e.g., enabling people to live in their familiar environment despite the physical and mental health challenges typically associated with aging. At the same time, she pointed out challenges, such as labor shortages, that make it harder to support those care services and emphasized that there is a potential for DX and new technologies to be a solution. Ms. Imoto therefore underscored the importance of learning from each other since Japan also has issues to tackle as well.

Notably, Ms. Imoto also referred to JICA’s experience with projects addressing population aging issues in Asia for more than 10 years and said that JICA is now implementing or formulating similar cooperation projects in various Latin American countries, including Mexico and Chile. In addition, Ms. Imoto discussed JICA’s collaboration with IDB Lab to



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promote private sector-led digital and technological solutions to development challenges, including those associated with aging populations.

To conclude her introductory remarks, Ms. Imoto lauded the enlightening findings and recommendations of this timely CSIS policy brief and welcomed insights from the event panelists, namely experts in the fields of social protection, older adult technology services and healthy aging from regional organizations such as the IDB and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), as well as a social services organization that supports older adults in using technology to improve their quality of life and enhance their social and civic engagement.

In the ensuing discussion, panelists collectively argued that technological solutions will be instrumental in transforming how people access and benefit from social and health services as they age. They also emphasized, inter alia, the key role the private sector plays in leading digital transformation in LAC in partnership with academia, NGOs and governments. They also recognized the importance of locally-tailored solutions (models) to the challenges facing aging populations and warned against “transplanting” foreign models for tackling aging issues to the region without proper regard to local conditions and needs.

Against this backdrop, JICA Senior Vice President Imoto underlined that through its partnership with IDB Lab, JICA’s financial support for Japanese technological innovators seeks to enable the co-creation of digital solutions which are tailored to the needs of partner countries in LAC. She added that JICA also regards its collaboration with Mexico and Chile around aging issues as an opportunity to assist these countries in broadening their roles as providers of South-South cooperation, particularly when it comes to addressing aging population matters.

In closing the event, Mr. Daniel Runde, CSIS Senior Vice President, recognized Japan/JICA’s long-term partnership with his organization and lauded Japan/JICA’s leadership in the provision of economic cooperation to developing countries in LAC and beyond.

A recording of the event is available [here](#).