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PRESS RELEASE

*For Immediate Release*

## **JICA SUPPORTS TO POPULARIZE S-HEALTH APP TO PROMOTE ELDERLY'S HEALTH**

**Hanoi, February 16, 2022** - The General Office of Population and Family Planning (GOPFP) and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) jointly organized the opening session in Hanoi on February 16 for an online training course on "**How to use the S-Health app**" for health workers in 5 provinces and cities including Hai Phong, Thai Binh, Phu Tho, Thanh Hoa and Hanoi, with the aim of improving elderly's health.

This training activity costs about 10 million yen (nearly 2 billion dong), funded by JICA.

At the opening session, JICA expressed its hope that with the support of the Japanese side, the S-Health app will be effectively popularized nationwide to help improve elderly's health. Ms. Nguyen Thi Ngoc Lan, Deputy Director General of GOPFP, and Ms. Nguyen Ngoc Quynh, the officer in charge at the United Nation Fund Population Agency (UNFPA) also affirmed their continued works with stakeholders to achieve the goals set by the Government of Vietnam in the "Health program for the elderly by 2030" and the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) "No one is left behind".

The "S-Health" app was jointly developed by GOPFP and UNFPA in 2020 to help improve elderly's health. The "S" in "S-Health" stands for "Silver", indicating older persons and also the shape of Vietnam as a country, meaning that Vietnam's elderly is the center of the country's strength, wisdom and the sources of continued socio-economic growth.

The application is developed to promote health management for the elderly, offering tips to stay healthy, exercises and information, measures to prevent COVID-19. In fact, there is a lot of information on taking care of the elderly's health online, however, the purpose of this application is to deliver the most accurate information to many people as quickly as possible.

Beside this activity, JICA also has another grassroots technical cooperation project "Supporting for preventive measures responding to elderly healthcare in Aging Society" which has been implemented since 2017. The project introduced the "Fall Prevention Exercises" for the elderly in Nam Tu Liem district, Hanoi. These exercises, practiced by the people of Tsuyama city, Okayama prefecture, Japan, prove to be effective in preventing falls and maintaining physical function for the elderly. Since 2022, a new project will be implemented with the goal to expand this grassroots project to other localities of Vietnam. The new project will be under collaboration of GOPFP and its 5 target provinces and cities. Vietnam is considered one of the countries with the fastest population aging in the world. It is forecast that 20 years from now, the country will become an "old society" with people over 65 years old accounting for 14% of the total population. By that time, social security and medical care for the elderly need to be strengthened, but the budget to respond to population aging is still limited while the demand for preventive activities is increasing. Research has also shown the physical and mental effects on the elderly due to social distancing and activity restrictions to prevent the COVID-19 epidemic.

In the future, JICA will continue to support vulnerable people affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in Vietnam./.

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