

JICA Global Agenda for Health

Cluster Strategy for Financial Protection in Health

toward a society where healthcare costs are financed equitably so that the poor and vulnerable can use quality health services without financial hardship



[Photo: SEN-CSU]



**SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS**



The Cluster Strategy on Financial Protection in Health aims to help achieve four key Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as part of the comprehensive SDG agenda.

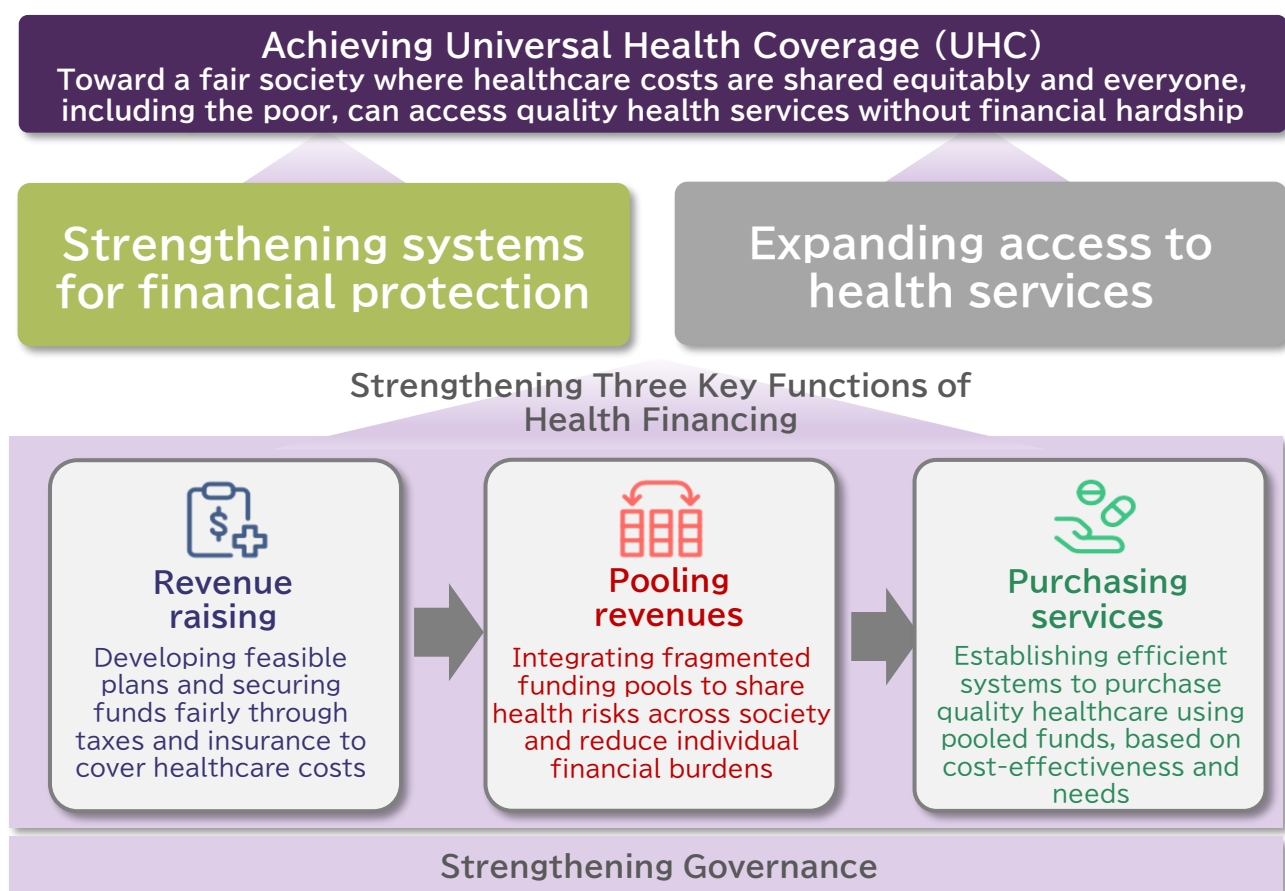
What is JICA Global Agenda and the Cluster Strategy for Financial Protection in Health?

JICA Global Agenda (JGA) is a set of cooperation strategies for global issues consisted of 20 thematic areas, including Health, to contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

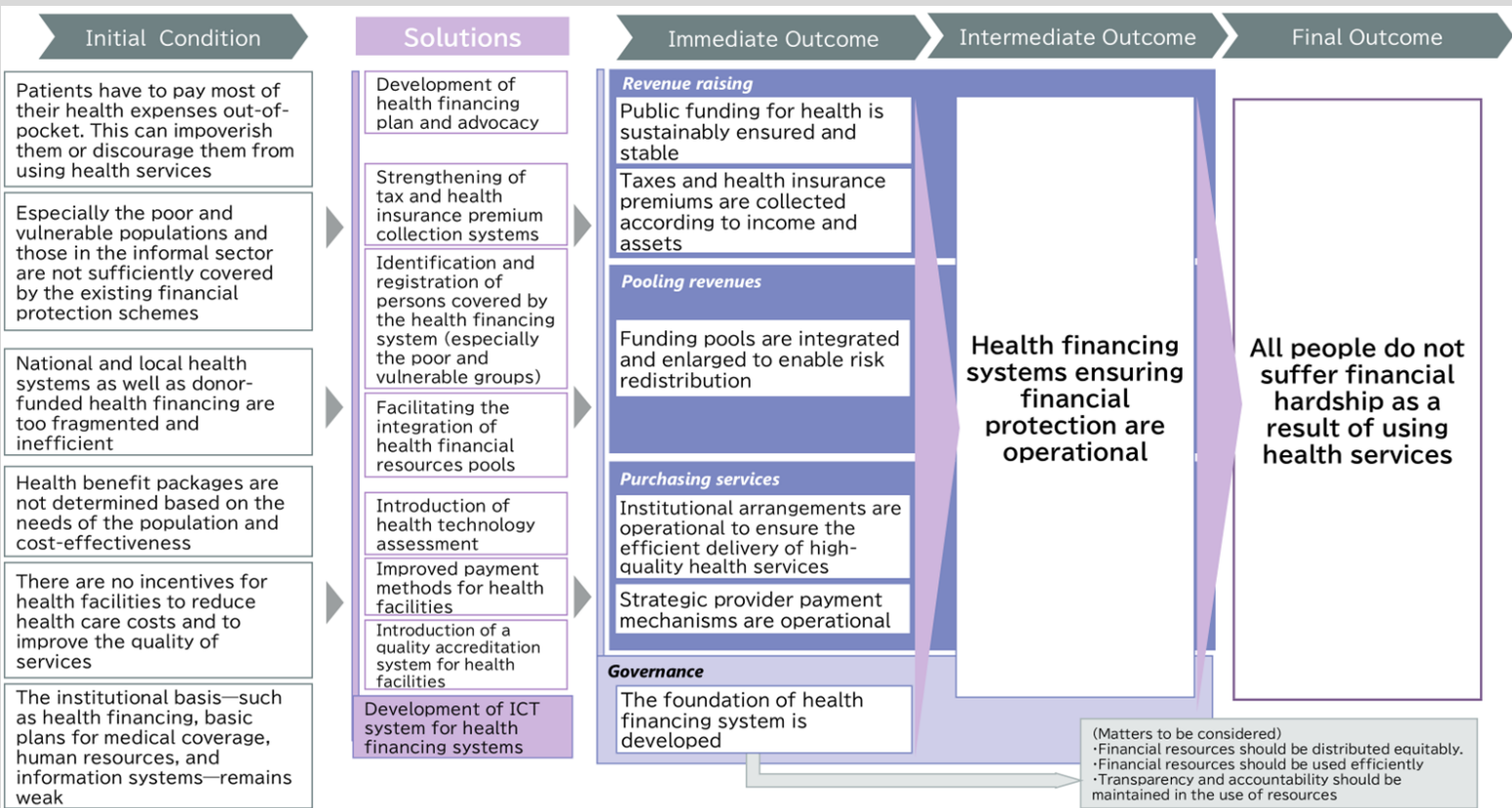
JGA for Health aims to help achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC) which ensures that everyone can access the health services they need without financial hardship – even during public health emergencies. To achieve UHC, two key pillars are essential: expanding access to health services, especially for the poor and vulnerable, and strengthening systems for health financing and financial protection.

The Cluster Strategy for Financial Protection in Health focuses on the second pillar – strengthening systems for health financing and financial protection – with the aim of ensuring that no one, including the poor and vulnerable, suffers financial hardship when accessing healthcare services. This strategy contributes to the achievement of UHC by strengthening health systems. It is based on the internationally recognized framework of the three core functions of health financing: revenue raising, pooling revenues, and purchasing services, along with strengthening governance as the foundation for those three functions. The strategy outlines scenarios for improvement in each function to drive meaningful change.

Three Key Functions of Health Financing for Achieving UHC



Conceptual Diagram of the Cluster Scenario



※Theoretically, the order of progression is "revenue raising," "pooling," and "purchasing." However, in many countries these three are partially in place. Therefore, it is not necessary to improve and achieve improvements in this order, but rather to improve the weaknesses in each of them.

JICA's Solutions and Results

Solutions for Strengthening Health Financing Functions

Revenue Raising

To address shortages of public health financing, support for developing medium- to long-term health financing plans through Development Policy Loans, and assistance in establishing tax and insurance premium exemption schemes for the poor, along with fiscal compensation.

Pooling Revenues

To reduce fragmentation of health financing, support for integrating schemes for formal, informal, and poor populations, and assistance through technical cooperation projects for household surveys and civil registration systems to identify the poor.

Purchasing Services

To promote strategic purchasing, support for ICT system development to streamline claims and reviews, improvement of payment processes for medical fees, and introduction and strengthening of healthcare facility accreditation systems.

Governance

Facilitation of policy dialogue between Ministries of Health and Finance, support for developing UHC roadmaps and health financing policies, and strengthening of organizational capacity and staff competencies of health financing agencies.

Results at a Glance (FY2013–2024)

35
countries and regions

JICA's cooperation in strengthening health financing systems

¥**94.1**
billion

Loan Assistance for health financing and financial protection (5 countries, 7 projects)

15
projects

Technical Cooperation to enhance financial protection system implementation (Approx. ¥7.4 billion)

287
participants

Government officials and health professionals trained on financial protection systems and UHC



A Japanese expert advising trainers during facility accreditation training (Sudan)



Thai hospital staff providing guidance to Lao staff during training (Thailand)

Examples of Initiatives

1 | Senegal: Strengthening Implementation Capacity of Health Insurance Systems to Protect the Poor

Since 2013, Senegal has promoted policies and programs aimed at achieving universal health coverage (UHC). To support these efforts, JICA provides a Development Policy Loan (DPL) and technical cooperation projects that strengthen community-based health insurance schemes for the informal sector and free healthcare programs for socially vulnerable groups, including the poor, infants, and pregnant women.

Through the DPL, JICA provides policy-level support, including financial assistance for premium subsidies for the poor and development of health financing strategies. Technical cooperation projects focus on strengthening organizational capacity through training and equipment and improving the monitoring capacity of health insurance implementing agencies and healthcare providers in target regions. These efforts enhance the implementation capacity of community-based health insurance systems at all levels.



A capacity-building training for staff of the departmental health insurance unit



Monitoring and reviewing the utilization of accounting tools



UHS enrollment and premium collection promotion campaign



Hospital quality management team discussing patient safety posters

2 | Egypt: Supporting Universal Health Insurance Expansion Through Multiple Approaches

Egypt enacted the Universal Health Insurance (UHI) Law in 2018. Previously, public health insurance covered only certain groups, such as civil servants, formal employees, and students. Under the new Universal Health Insurance System (UHS), coverage is expanding to all citizens through a phased rollout across six regions nationwide.

JICA provides support through financial assistance via DPL and technical cooperation to strengthen the UHI Authority and improve hospital service quality, creating synergistic effects. Specifically, JICA has offered financial assistance for health insurance premium subsidies for low-income groups, development of medical facilities, and establishment of medical billing and pharmaceutical supply systems. Technical assistance also promotes UHS enrollment through campaigns, enhances premium collection capacity, and helps medical institutions obtain quality accreditation. JICA works closely with partners such as the World Bank, Agence Française de Développement (AFD), and the World Health Organization to ensure steady implementation and consolidation of UHS.

Partnerships for Co-Creation: Combining Strengths for Greater Impact

Strengthening health insurance systems requires a multidimensional approach, including financial support, policy and legal framework development, organizational capacity building for implementing agencies and healthcare providers, staff training, beneficiary awareness and enrollment promotion, and digital transformation.

Leveraging its strengths in promoting enrollment and supporting premium collection for the informal sector, JICA collaborates with other international aid agencies and partner governments to support comprehensive system development. In Egypt, enrollment campaigns targeting the informal sector were integrated into other partners' activities, and guidelines for enrollment management and medical billing procedures developed through JICA's technical cooperation contributed to meeting loan conditions set by partners. These efforts created synergistic effects by combining JICA's strengths with partners' resources.

