

Advancing a health-promoting society to protect people's lives at all times

JICA contributes to achieving resilient, equitable, and sustainable Universal Health Coverage (UHC) where all people can access the health services they need, when they need them, without facing financial hardship.

JICA supports health system strengthening, including better prevention, preparedness, and response to public health emergencies. We contribute to protecting lives, livelihoods, and dignity and advancing human security, through the attainment of health and well-being for all.



The vulnerability of health systems has been revealed, and health disparities have become increasingly apparent

Emergence of Health Inequalities

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed vulnerabilities in health systems worldwide, including in high-income countries. Recent data show that about 4.6 billion people—nearly half the global population—do not have access to quality essential services, and 2.1 billion face financial hardship from out-of-pocket expenses. In low- and middle-income countries, disparities based on income, education, and urban–rural residence are becoming more pronounced, and out-of-pocket costs are driving many poor households deeper into poverty. (Source: 2025 UHC Global Monitoring Report)

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Impact of Global Challenges

Global challenges—including climate change, population ageing, urbanization, the digital revolution, and widening inequality—are becoming more evident and require urgent action. Climate change, in particular, is seen as the greatest health threat to humanity. The need to build resilient health systems that can provide stable services during crises such as pandemics, while ensuring access for all, has been underscored once again.



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(All data from WHO, 2025 UHC Global Monitoring Report)

Japan's experience and lessons in achieving healthy longevity—through measures such as infectious disease control, improved maternal and child health, and universal health insurance—hold valuable insights for other countries.

Since the late Edo period (1603-1868), Japan actively introduced western medicines and at the beginning of the Showa period (1926-1989), Japan addressed national public health issues such as tuberculosis control and the improvement of maternal and child health through the introduction of public health centers. After the World War II, the national government advanced the policy and system for health promotion, and Japan has established a universal health insurance system in 1961. Maintaining UHC with high quality has helped Japan achieve one of the highest level of healthy longevity. These are the valuable experiences that can be shared with the rest of the world. Thus, the international cooperation toward achieving UHC in the low- and middle-income countries is worthwhile for Japan to cope with its own experiences. Based on the relationship of trust over many years of cooperation with emphasis on the ownership and sustainability, JICA aims to play a leading role in promoting global solidarity for achieving UHC.



Periodical health check-up for infants and children by public health nurse (Photo courtesy: Nishiwaga Town, Iwate Prefecture)

Approach 1

Strengthening Health Service Delivery

From the perspective of health systems strengthening, we will focus on improving the quality and quantity of health and medical services, particularly through human resource development, improvement of health facility equipment, and facility management. In doing so, we will promote initiatives that enhance resilience, equity, and sustainability.



Approach 2

Strengthening of Capacity for Infectious Disease Control and Testing

In strengthening infectious disease countermeasures and testing hubs, we will primarily enhance capabilities in the critical surveillance steps of "detection," "reporting," "analysis and interpretation," and "response and evaluation," aiming to control infectious diseases that threaten human lives and livelihoods.



Approach 3

Strengthening Quality Continuum of Care for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (MNCH) including the effective use of Maternal and Child Health Handbooks

We aim for all mothers and children to utilize high-quality continuum of care services and for mothers, families, and communities to provide appropriate care at home. To achieve this, we will promote the introduction and utilization of the Maternal and Child Health Handbook, where Japan and JICA possess particular expertise, alongside interventions with proven effectiveness.



Approach 4

Strengthening Financial Protection in Health

Through the development and improvement of health financing systems that ensure financial protection, we aim to realize a society where all people, including the poor and vulnerable, can access high-quality healthcare services without facing financial hardship. We will support the establishment of mechanisms for sharing healthcare costs across society by enhancing national commitment, providing policy advice, strengthening institutional operational capacity, coordinating with service delivery, and offering financial support.



Other Approach

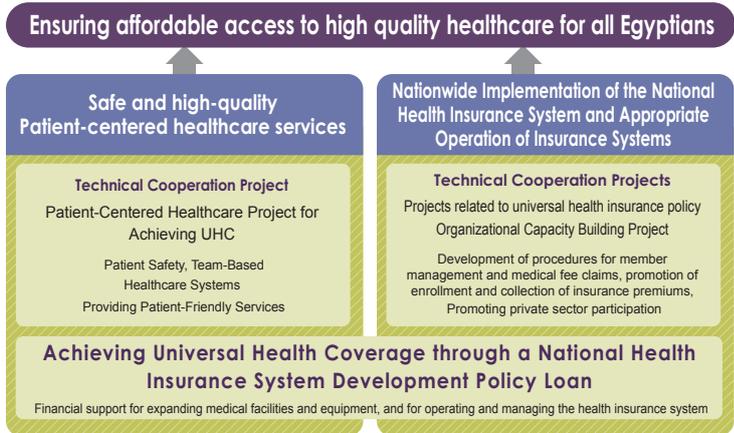
Measures to address an Ageing Society

Drawing on Japan's experience and knowledge, we are also initiating cooperation to create environments, develop human resources, and establish systems that enable older adults to live healthy and active lives in their familiar communities. This involves promoting community-based integrated care that encourage collaboration among various stakeholders and institutions involved in supporting older adults, spreading preventive care activities, and creating age-friendly communities.



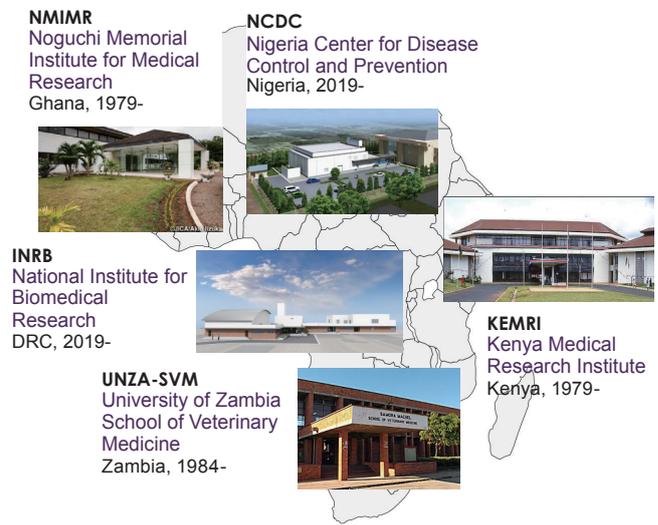
1 | Egypt: Supporting UHC Achievement through National Expansion of Universal Health Coverage and Improvement of Healthcare Service Quality

In Egypt, only part of the population is covered by health insurance, and many people rely on private hospitals due to the low quality of public services, placing a heavy financial burden on households. To address this, the Universal Health Coverage Act was enacted in 2018, and a nationwide UHC system is being rolled out across six regions. In cooperation with the World Bank, WHO, and others, JICA supports system establishment through subscriber management, medical billing procedures, enrollment promotion in the informal sector, and premium collection. At the same time, by supporting public facilities to improve service quality and obtain accreditation, JICA contributes to protecting citizens' health and reducing excessive out of pocket expenses.



2 | Strengthening Infectious Disease Control Hubs in Africa (PREPARE Program)

JICA has provided support combining facility development and human resource development in African countries, working to enhance the capabilities of infectious disease control core laboratories in Kenya, Ghana, Zambia, and others. These hubs now serve as core regional institutions contributing to cross-border infectious disease control. In line with the Japanese government's policy to strengthen health crisis response, JICA is leveraging its established cooperative relationships to promote the development of global infectious disease control experts and strengthen networks. This aims to enhance collaboration between national core laboratories and relevant institutions within Japan, thereby contributing to the establishment of a global pandemic preparedness mechanism.



Collaboration with Partners

We are also strategically engaged in cultivating future leaders and introducing new technologies.

Through JICA Development Studies Program (JICA scholarship program (Master/Doctor)), we develop future global leaders with a wide range of network by cultivating knowledge and skills, including Japanese experience and a global perspective. We form a broad platform involving research institutions, universities, NGOs and other stakeholders, and also actively seek collaboration with the private sector. In particular, we are introducing digital

health technologies to overcome the challenges faced by low- and middle-income countries. In this process, it is important to deepen collaboration with Japanese local governments, universities, and private companies, keeping in mind the cycle of deploying Japanese innovative efforts in low- and middle-income countries and returning the lessons learned to domestic technological development in Japan.



Nibancho Center Building, 5-25 Nibancho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-8012
 TEL: 03-5226-6660~6663 (Main)
 Email: jica@m.jica.go.jp



Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is an international cooperation organization that is centrally responsible for the implementation of bilateral assistance among Japan's Official Development Assistance. JICA cooperates with about 150 countries and regions around the world.

What is JICA Global Agenda

JICA's 20 cooperation strategies for global issues to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs by 2030 and to the realization of Human Security as the guiding principle of Japan's development cooperation. We set global goals based on an analysis of the issues and promote our development cooperation projects to achieve them. Furthermore, we aim to expand the results of development cooperation by promoting dialogue and collaboration with our partner countries as well as various actors at home and abroad.