



# JICA Iran Newsletter

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## Happy New Year 2026



### Greetings from Chief Representative

Salam.

It is a great honor to be here in Iran, a country whose culture has influenced the world for thousands of years. Iran stands today, as it has for millennia, as a vital geopolitical bridge, connecting East and West, inheriting a legacy of scholarship, and art that inspires the entire world. From the thoughtful expressions shared in daily conversation to the heartfelt hospitality of its people, Iran's depth is truly extraordinary, and I look forward to immersing myself in its culture.



The relationship between Japan and Iran is rooted in a centuries-long connection shaped by cultural affinity, civil exchange, and bilateral cooperation. Our connection is not merely one of recent diplomatic ties but a profound, ancient cultural influence. Even before modern communication, the spirit of Persia reached Japan, influencing our artistry, philosophy, and worldview. Today, that enduring mutual understanding forms the bedrock of our collaborative future.

My purpose here is to uphold and expand upon this trusted foundation as we continue our joint commitment to development. For decades, our collaboration has evolved from early engagement in human resource development to comprehensive support programs in various sectors such as health, human resource development, disaster risk reduction, environment, agriculture, water resources, and energy. We prioritize projects that

empower Iranian officials and entities, ensuring greater human security building the foundation for long-term, high-quality growth in Iran.

I am honored to have started my work as Chief Representative, commencing my tenure on November 1, 2025. This enormous aspiration—to help realize the potential of Iran and its people—is not something any single organization can achieve alone. It requires wide-ranging support and the active collaboration of Iranian governmental bodies, local organizations, and all other partners.

We are always ready to cooperate and fully committed. Let us strengthen this historic bond and work together toward a brighter future for all.

MATSUMOTO Hideaki  
Chief Representative  
JICA Iran Office

## Hope and Healing Beyond Borders

### JICA's Key Contributions and Global Footprint

In a small clinic in Guatemala, a mother carefully flips through the Maternal and Child Health Handbook—a simple but powerful tool that originated in Japan and now supports families worldwide in tracking their children's growth and health. This moment symbolizes the broader mission of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), whose commitment

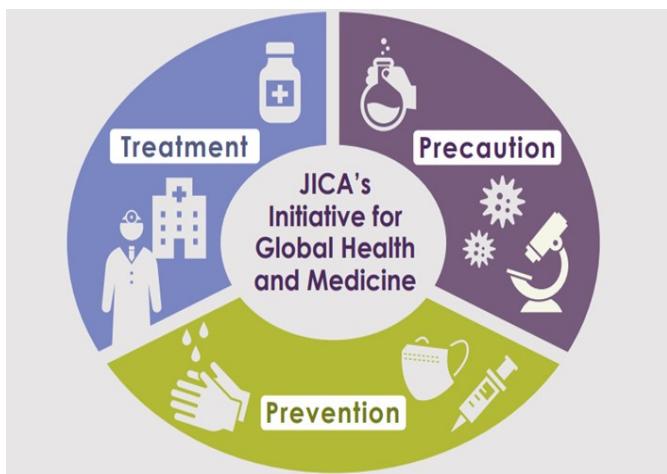


Home Visit for Health Check-up of Infants by Public Health Nurse (photo taken in 1944 / Photo: Mainichi Newspapers)

to global health extends across continents.

JICA's work goes beyond policy; it is a pledge to empower communities, strengthen health systems, and ensure no one is left behind. Whether in Asia, Africa, Latin America, or the

Middle East, JICA collaborates with countries, fostering partnerships built on respect, compassion, and local knowledge.



At the core of JICA's vision is the belief that quality healthcare is a right, not a privilege. This vision is supported by three fundamental pillars:

**Universal Health Coverage (UHC):** JICA supports countries in making healthcare accessible to all by training medical workers, upgrading hospital infrastructure, and expanding health insurance systems to reach the most vulnerable. The aim is to transform healthcare delivery into a more equitable and inclusive system.

**Health Security:** The COVID-19 pandemic exposed weaknesses in health systems worldwide. JICA helps nations build strong emergency response capacities. For instance, after the Ebola crisis, JICA assisted Sierra Leone in creating a national disease control center. In Southeast Asia, regional collaboration enables early detection and swift responses to infectious diseases, protecting communities before crises arise.

**Health Across the Life Course:** Health needs span all stages of life, from infancy to old age. JICA promotes continuous care through

initiatives like the Maternal and Child Health Handbook, encouraging regular checkups and informed parenting to support healthier families and communities.

JICA's strategies focus on strengthening hospitals' diagnostic and treatment capacities, enhancing infectious disease control and testing, improving maternal and child health, and developing robust health financing systems. This includes upgrading facilities, training healthcare professionals, leveraging digital tools like telemedicine, promoting early disease detection, and ensuring affordable access to quality care—all aimed at reducing mortality and improving global health outcomes.

### Bridging Health Across Continents

JICA's health initiatives reach over 150 countries, tailoring solutions to unique local needs. In Guatemala, efforts to combat child malnutrition through education about local nutritious foods have helped reduce stunting. In Vietnam, JICA applied Japan's "kaizen" philosophy of continuous improvement to train nurses and optimize hospital management, boosting patient care and efficiency. "Kaizen" initiatives have been adopted in healthcare facilities across more than 40 countries worldwide. In Tajikistan, mobile clinics and midwife training expanded healthcare access, lowering infant mortality rates. These projects represent more than statistics—they reflect empowerment, dignity, and hope.

### Working Together for a Healthier Middle East

In the Middle East, JICA combines innovation with cultural sensitivity. In Egypt, a "Patient-Centered Care" program brought together Egyptian and Japanese professionals to enhance hospital services through empathy and

communication. In Jordan and Iraq, JICA supported health reforms, worker training, data improvements, and mental health services for refugees and displaced persons. It also aided in rebuilding Iraq's healthcare system and integrated refugee care into Jordan's national framework, ensuring inclusivity.



### A Partnership in Iran

Iran has grown into a vital partner over the past decade. Besides bilateral efforts, Iran has joined Japan in supporting maternal and child health programs in Afghanistan, exemplifying trilateral cooperation.

Within Iran, JICA has provided advanced training in cancer and heart disease care and supplied state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment to Tehran hospitals. This is expected to enhance early detection and improves patient outcomes.

The eagerness of Iranian health professionals' to adopt advanced management and safety practices strengthens a sustainable culture of quality care. Though Iran's healthcare meets global standards, an aging population makes sustainability critical. JICA shares Japan's expertise in elderly care and supplies diagnostic

tools to detect serious diseases earlier, aiding easier treatment.



### Listening First, Then Acting

By listening and partnering, JICA co-creates solutions that respect local contexts.

Facing global challenges like aging populations and climate-related diseases, JICA's Global Health Agenda continues to shine, emphasizing that health is about humanity, not just medicine. Across continents—from Guatemala's mountains to Iran's hospitals—JICA builds bridges of knowledge, compassion, and hope. Together, these efforts move the world toward a healthier, fairer future for all.

