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PRESS RELEASE

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JICA CONTINUES ASSISTANCE TO VIETNAM IN FIGHTING COVID-19

- STRENGTHENING TESTING CAPACITY OF NATIONAL HOSPITAL OF TROPICAL DISEASES

Hanoi, November 25th, 2020 - As a countermeasure against COVID-19 in Vietnam, responding to the request of the National Hospital of Tropical Disease (NHTD), JICA decided to provide NHTD testing equipments including an automatic PCR system, worth totally 60 million yen (roughly 13 billion VND). The first batch of the assistance package was handed over to NHTD on November 25th, 2020.

JICA operates a Technical Cooperation project with NHTD – the leading hospital responsible for the infectious disease diagnosis and treatment in the Northern region of Vietnam, through the Project for **“Establishment of the “bench-to-bedside”* feedback system for sustainable art and prevention of new HIV transmission in Vietnam”** with the aim of controlling the spread of HIV in Vietnam. The project is to build a mechanism for centralized monitoring of the HIV treatment at regional hospitals, researching and developing the immune mechanism of HIV virus infection.

This assistance package for NHTD is expected to further strengthen the project’s HIV testing capacity and the hospital’s PCR testing capacity in dealing with COVID-19.

In combating with COVID-19, NHTD is responsible for the front-line treatment of COVID-19 patients, including critical cases, also, is in charge of the isolation and PCR tests to the suspected and confirmed cases.

In March-April 2020, when the epidemic spread drastically, 200-300 PCR tests were conducted per day by the NHTD. However, the Real-time PCR equipment currently used by the hospital is still manually performed in many steps, thus it takes a lot of labor cost and time for the examination and puts a heavy burden on the hospital.

After the re-occurrence of the epidemic in Da Nang in July 2020, though the number of COVID-19 patients is currently settling down, with the resumption of international traffic started from September 2020 and about 15,000 people currently in quarantine, the Vietnamese Government remains vigilant. This support is expected to speed up PCR tests and reduce the burden on NHTD.

JICA, under the leadership of the Government of Japan, will continue to support the Government of Vietnam in strengthening the preparedness to COVID-19.

** A system that implements effectively HIV treatment by performing a viral load and drug resistance testing of registered patients of the target medical facilities at laboratory of NHTD (bench), and promptly feeds back the results obtained from the test to the clinical site of the target medical facilities (bedside) and related departments such as the Vietnam Administration of HIV/AIDS Control of the Ministry of Health*

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