

Protecting Lives and Health

The COVID-19 pandemic is a historic global event that has been detrimental not only to people's health, but also to economies across the world. JICA believes international cooperation and solidarity are indispensable in overcoming this pandemic, and we believe it is especially vital to strengthen global health and medical systems to achieve this goal. To move forward from the pandemic and establish a resilient society that is prepared to combat infectious diseases, both now and into the future, JICA is strongly promoting JICA's Initiative for Global Health and Medicine.



Japan's Experience in Health Care: From Edo to Reiwa

Japan has a long history of excelling in the field of medicine, leveraging its cutting-edge science and technological capabilities. The history of Japanese medical education dates back to the Edo period when Ogata Koan, the founder of the Tekijuku School, and Sato Taizen, the founder of Junendo University, introduced Western medical education to Japan and reformed the country's medical care. During the Meiji era, Kitasato Shibasaburo discovered the infectious agent responsible for the bubonic plague, and Gotō Shinpei successfully organized a massive quarantine for returning soldiers of the Japan-Qing War and later established water and sewage systems in Taiwan. Japan also enhanced its infectious disease prevention measures by constructing water and sewage systems and by educating citizens about the importance of hygiene. In recent years, Professor Yamanaka Shinya was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his research on iPS cells, and Dr. Omura Satoshi was awarded the same prize for his novel therapy against infections caused by roundworm parasites. As a leader in field of medicine, Japan seeks to share its medical knowledge with partner countries through international cooperation.

*In order to contribute to the development and practical use of vaccines and pharmaceuticals that utilize Japanese technology, we will also help develop and expand clinical trials and production systems in partner countries.

Treatment



Construction and expansion of hospitals

341 hospitals were built, expanded or reconstructed
(FY1973 – FY2020)

Prevention



Handwashing campaigns*

200 educational and awareness-raising activities in **48** countries
(September 2020 – March 2021)

Number of people with access to safe water due to JICA's programs

over **28** million
(FY2011 – FY2020)

Precaution



Centers for Infectious Disease Testing and Research

Established or expanded core laboratories in

13 countries

For more information on the Handwashing for Health and Life Campaign, click here.



A case study of JICA's cooperation in helping to combat COVID-19 in Vietnam



Starting with the construction and human resource development of the Cho Ray Hospital (1966) in southern Vietnam, JICA has since expanded its cooperation in the country to also include the Bach Mai Hospital (1998) in the north and Hue Central Hospital (2004) in central Vietnam. By establishing strong infectious disease control measures at these hospitals, these hospitals have been able to treat COVID-19 patients while continuing their regular medical services. These hospitals have also then been able to relay information on how to effectively treat COVID-19 patients to local hospitals.

Since 2003, JICA has worked with the Kitasato Daiichi Sankyo Vaccine Co., Ltd. to strengthen the manufacturing capacity of Vietnam's Center for Research and Production of Vaccines and Biologicals (POLYVAC) to produce measles and measles-rubella vaccines. Building on this experience, POLYVAC is working to now develop a domestically produced COVID-19 vaccine.

Since 2006, JICA has been partnering with the National Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology (NIHE) to establish laboratories and support the institute's capacity development. From the early stages of the COVID-19 outbreak, NIHE has been leading the development of a nationwide rapid PCR testing system in Vietnam by utilizing the network of local laboratories it has built through its previous collaborations with JICA.

