



The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) engages in development cooperation across the world to realize Human Security, which is one of its main missions. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, has ravaged the world, including economically affluent nations. It also has left many countries and their people with overwhelmed health systems and damaged economies and livelihoods. The impact of COVID-19 could resemble the distress caused by the Great Depression and the Second World War. Therefore, this pandemic has the potential to bring about enormous structural change that may reshape our world.

Since the beginning of 2020, JICA's operations have also been impacted by COVID-19. Given medical and transportation challenges caused by the pandemic, JICA has made the tough decision to bring our experts and volunteers back to Japan from 109 countries. Some JICA staff, however, such as Chief Representatives and Senior Representatives, remained in their assigned countries. Together with local staff in our overseas offices, all staff have worked hard

to continue cooperation with partner countries through online meetings and other mechanisms. As part of our efforts, JICA is extending an Emergency Support Loan program to assist countries in their economic recovery. We also collaborate with partner countries to respond to the COVID-19 crisis through the rapid deployment of medical equipment and the training of medical staff. Furthermore, as of August 2020, JICA staff have begun to return to their assigned countries to accelerate our operations. By continuing our comprehensive social and economic cooperation, JICA will make further efforts to prevent COVID-19 from causing longstanding damage to our partner countries.

In the coming years, the fight against COVID-19 will likely continue. In this COVID-19 and post-COVID-19 world, it will remain necessary for countries to strengthen their trust and ties with one another. As the implementing agency of Japan's official development assistance, JICA recognizes we must play a larger role in building resilient societies through the trust that we have fostered over many

Message

Building Resilient Societies Based on Mutual Trust

years with our partner countries.

COVID-19 has also shown us the vulnerabilities that developing countries face in their own public health and medical systems. In order to improve these situations, JICA will build on the achievement of the past assistance to provide comprehensive cooperation to protect the lives of all people. JICA continues to advance medical facilities construction, establish public health structures, and reinforce capacity development efforts by following scientific recommendations and utilizing Japan's development experience and cutting-edge technology. Through these efforts, JICA will encourage developing countries to build resilient health systems. In addition, we will also continue our endeavor to control the spread of infectious diseases with promotion of preventive measures such as establishing water and hygiene facilities, instilling proper hand hygiene, and improving global nutrition.

While travel restrictions may continue for the time being, JICA will work to develop creative cooperation mechanisms by utilizing

the global networks that we have fostered over many years. As part of our efforts, JICA will take bold action to provide opportunities for future leaders of partner countries to study in Japan at the graduate level. We will also try to improve the environment of accepting foreign nationals who come to work in Japan. While doing so, we will also exercise necessary precautionary measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

In accordance with our vision "Leading the world with trust," JICA will continue to strengthen collaborations with our partners and make our strongest effort to advance the development of our partner countries to establish a more stable and prosperous world.

September 2020

KITAOKA Shinichi
President
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)