

Japan Policy and Human Resources Development Fund

Universal Health Coverage Country Program

JAPANESE EXPERTISE IN ACTION



SRI LANKA

BUILDING SRI LANKA'S CAPACITY TO MEET GROWING DEMAND FOR ELDERLY CARE

2021–2023 | US\$855,000 grant

Sri Lanka's health care system is facing a triple burden. It needs to strengthen pandemic preparedness, maintain basic health services at the pre-economic crisis level despite limited resources, and meet the growing health care demand for non-communicable diseases in an aging population.

In this context, the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) Country Program, implemented by the World Bank and funded by the Japan Policy and Human Resources Development Fund (PHRD) supported the government of Sri Lanka to conduct analytical work and share best practices and expertise on sound fiscal policies that would allow the country to finance pandemic preparedness and routine health care delivery. The Sri Lanka Pandemic Preparedness Assessment project addressed four areas: the impact of COVID-19 on health financing and service delivery, pandemic preparedness and response capacity, efficiency gains in health care, and capacity building and knowledge exchange for ageing and long-term care.

Learning from Japan's Experience

Capacity building and knowledge exchange were among the most successful activities of the project. Sri Lanka officials from the ministries of health and finance, as well as provincial and district health authorities participated in learning and knowledge exchange meetings, webinars, and events. Ten of them also traveled to Japan to learn from Japan's experience in health care and health systems in addressing the needs of a rapidly aging population within limited resources. In coordination with the Bureau of International Health Cooperation of the National Center for Global Health and Medicine of Japan, the participants gained insights into Japan's health care system focusing on aging and long-term care at different levels. They looked at central government and local administrations, hospitals, primary care facilities, and health promotion and preventive activities. They learned how elderly care is organized and provided in local administrations, hospitals, and clinics, as well as how communities can support health and welfare services for the elderly, as part of an integrated care system.



This knowledge exchange greatly contributed to building Sri Lanka's capacity to reorganize its health systems efficiently to cater to the growing demand for elderly care. For Sri Lanka, learning from Japan is especially valuable as Japan shares key similarities such as a highly densely populated island and a rapidly aging population.

Results Achieved

- In addition to capacity building and learning exchange, the project achieved tangible results, including:
- 10 government officials participated in study tours in Japan.
- The project examined the technical efficiency of 81 district, divisional, and base hospitals.
- 3,150,429 people received cash transfers in response to COVID-19.
- 1000 field staff of elder care, homes for the people with special needs, and orphanages received equipment and training for prevention and care measures.
- 30,000 healthcare staff were trained in infection prevention and control according to Ministry of Health-approved protocols.
- 238,000 women received cervical cancer screening at a public health facilities.

The program's analytical and advisory work also informed three World Bank projects: the [Sri Lanka COVID-19 Emergency Response](#), the [Sri Lanka: Primary Health Systems Strengthening Project](#), and the [Sri Lanka: Primary Healthcare System Enhancing Project](#).

To find out more about PHRD programs and grants, visit the [Policy and Human Resources Development Fund](#) website or contact us at phrdgrants@worldbank.org.

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