



SEARCH FOR ASIA PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP ON INTERNATIONAL HEALTH CRISES: POSSIBILITIES AND CHALLENGES

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Policy Recommendations

- In terms of the post-2015 global agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals that are to succeed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) should continue to focus on health goals.
- U.S.-Japan cooperation should be expanded in R&D efforts on vaccines for communicable diseases and in helping implement universal health coverage to stem the spread of communicable diseases.
- The China-Korea-Japan health ministerial meeting should be held consistently, regardless of political issues, since health is a fundamental value and a critical human security issue.
- Asia Pacific countries should establish dialogues on communicable disease issues not only at the country level, but also at the regional and local government levels.
- Since it is expected that MDG # 6 (HIV/AIDS) will not be fully met, governments and private philanthropic foundations should redouble their attention to this issue.

Ebola and HIV are two diseases that exemplify the types of global health security issues the international community is facing today. They are too complex and vast in scale for any single entity to tackle. For that reason, public-private partnerships (PPPs) increasingly offer an effective way to decrease the number of people affected by communicable diseases. The International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, are two examples of major public-private partnerships that provide a global framework for vaccine initiatives, but efforts are also underway at the national, binational, and regional levels.

U.S. Response to Global Health

Since the Ebola outbreak first began in West Africa in March 2014, the US government has provided about \$820 million in aid, representing 34.9 percent of the total humanitarian assistance by donors. The private sector has played a role as well. In particular, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation announced that it would provide emergency funding in the amount of \$50 million to combat the Ebola outbreak in West Africa and subsequently committed \$5.7 million more for an initiative being carried out in cooperation with other funders, corporations, and researchers to develop Ebola treatments in Guinea and other affected areas.

The U.S. government has also been active in the effort to address HIV/AIDS, particularly through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), which was established in 2003 and focuses on PPPs. In 2014, PEPFAR announced the DREAMS partnership, in which the Gates Foundation and Nike Foundation are private partners. DREAMS "aims to ensure that girls have an opportunity to live Determined,

Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored and Safe lives." The Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation has also been partnering with PEPFAR, focusing primarily on the prevention of mother to child transmission of AIDS. Such PPPs have proven very effective to date, for example cutting the rate of new infections among children in Zimbabwe from 40,000 to 9,000 in 15 years. However, despite the ongoing needs, the total amount of U.S. private philanthropic giving toward the fight against HIV/AIDS has been declining.

Japan's Response on Communicable Diseases

Japan has an established track record in addressing communicable diseases. In 2000, they announced the Okinawa Infectious Diseases Initiative, pledging concrete action and funding to help stop communicable disease. Those objectives were continued under the Health and Development Initiative announced in 2005, and in the Toyako Framework for Action on Global Health launched in 2008. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has continued to prioritize global health diplomacy during his tenure. The development of public health systems in developing countries was among his administration's first priorities, and Abe declared in his 2013 speech to the UN General Assembly that Japan would promote universal health coverage.

Japan's commitment to global health is reflected in the fact that Japan is among the top five donors to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Similarly, it has responded both multilaterally and bilaterally to the Ebola threat, starting with the immediate provision to Guinea of emergency relief. The Japanese government has provided more than

\$155 million to fight the Ebola outbreak to date. In the private sector, companies are involved both in seeking a cure and in providing funding. However, the Japanese philanthropic community has not gotten involved in the Ebola response. Moreover, Japan has been lagging far behind in sending health care workers to Africa.

U.S.-Japan Partnership on Global Health Challenges

In recent years, the US-Japan alliance has increasingly focused on health issues. In 2001, U.S.-Japan collaboration on public health—e.g., health systems, maternal health, infectious diseases—was addressed under the new U.S.-Japan Partnership for Security and Prosperity. In 2013, during a meeting between Prime Minister Abe and Vice President Joe Biden, the two countries confirmed their commitment to cooperation in meeting such global challenges as global health and the MDGs. In addition to bilateral U.S.-Japan collaboration, the two countries have been working together at the multilateral level through such initiatives as the Global Health Security Agenda and the Global Health Security Initiative (GHSI).

Asia Pacific Partnership on Global Health Challenges

Efforts are also underway at the regional level in Asia Pacific to address global health challenges. At the East Asia Summit in November 2014, a joint declaration was issued on the regional response to the Ebola outbreak, and more broadly to emerging infectious diseases (EID), which called for stronger cooperation on the prevention and control of EIDs, pandemic preparedness, surveillance, and public awareness raising, among other measures. The East Asia Summit leaders also agreed to support R&D to eradicate

malaria by 2030, and the ASEAN+3 health ministers held a special meeting on Ebola preparedness and response at which they stressed not only the need to accelerate the development of an Ebola vaccine, but also the spread of universal health coverage to support preparedness for and response to EIDs. A China-Korea-Japan tripartite health ministerial meeting has been held since 2007 to discuss public health issues and EIDs, although it was cancelled in 2012 because the Chinese health minister was not able to attend that meeting—something that should not occur in the case of such a critical issue as public health.

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