Japan Center for International Exchange, JCIE is a nongovernmental, nonpartisan foreign affairs institute with a long history of work on traditional and nontraditional security issues and cross-sectoral collaboration on policy issues. Since 2017, we have been working on the program of Healthy and Active Aging in Asia, in cooperation with the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) under the auspices of the Japanese government’s Asia Health and Wellbeing Initiative, widely known as AHWIN.

The goal of the initiative is to create vibrant and healthy societies where people can enjoy long and productive lives, and to contribute to the region’s sustainable and equitable development as well as economic growth. Drawing on the lessons learned in Japan, the most aged country in the world, we aim to review and share elements of Japan’s experience with aging that could benefit other countries, and at the same time promote mutual learning and understanding within the region.

Through the AHWIN initiative, JCIE facilitate policy research and dialogues on healthy aging, care for older persons and other relevant issues that benefit from a regional approach. One key milestone we have made is the launch of the Healthy Aging Prize for Asian Innovation in 2020, which is an award program seeking to recognize and amplify innovative policies, programs, services, and products that address the challenges facing aging societies, help extend healthy and meaningful lives, and improve the provision of care to older adults. By sharing lessons from East and Southeast Asia, we aim to contribute to this international movement, and to meeting the objectives of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing particularly, advancing health and well-being into old age and ensuring enabling and supportive environments, and also of the sustainable development goal, particularly goal 3, which calls for ensuring healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

As we are all aware, Asia is a diverse region with numerous cultures and ethnicities, which are closely tied to social values which could determine how families would provide care for older persons. Given that, we feel it is important to identify good practices conducted in the region, facilitating the process of inspiration and mutual learning within the region.