

Unitaid and Japan:

Working together for universal health coverage

Unitaid's collaboration with the Japanese government supports our joint objectives of achieving universal health coverage to strengthen pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, supporting a resilient global health architecture for international health security, and meeting the targets in Sustainable Development Goal 3: Good health and well-being.

In recognition of Japan's global leadership in fighting major infectious diseases, Japan officially joined Unitaid's Executive Board in December 2020. Japan is Unitaid's fifth-largest donor, having contributed US\$19.52 million towards Unitaid's lifesaving innovations.

Unitaid saves lives by making health products accessible, available and affordable for people who need them most – fast. We identify challenges that are slowing progress towards global health goals, find and

invest in innovative products and solutions, address the market barriers that are holding them back, then work with countries and partners to take them to scale so people everywhere can benefit. Innovative diagnostic tests, medicines and health products supported by Unitaid are now part of standard of care available in over 100 countries.

Unitaid's key results:



300 million people use Unitaid-supported health products every year, including over 50 million children



100+ groundbreaking products introduced since 2006



Our approach helps reach global health targets **three years faster**



US\$8 billion in savings by 2030 from reduced prices and greater efficiencies

Case study:

First-ever drugs for children with drug-resistant TB










Chad, from Cape Town, South Africa, was diagnosed with drug-resistant TB (DR-TB) when he was just five years old. In the past, there was no child-specific treatment available; nurses had to crush bitter-tasting adult pills and guess at the right dose. It was hard to get children to take the treatment, and with the incorrect dosage, many children continued to suffer or died from the disease.

Unitaid helped bring to market the first-ever treatment for children with DR-TB – a fruit-flavored dispersible tablet that is easy for children like Chad to take, ensuring they complete their treatment and can go on to live healthy, TB-free lives.

Photo: Stellenbosch University/Unitaid




We invest in high-potential treatments, vaccines, diagnostics and health products to address some of the world’s biggest health challenges, and invest in cross-cutting areas that strengthen health systems and support the SDGs:

-  **HIV and coinfections**
-  **Tuberculosis**
-  **Malaria**
-  **Women’s and children’s health**
-  **Global health emergencies**
-  **Medical oxygen**
-  **Regional manufacturing**
-  **Climate and health**
-  **Universal health coverage**

Tuberculosis

Tuberculosis (TB) is the second leading cause of death by infectious disease after COVID-19 – causing more deaths than HIV and malaria combined. We work to ensure new TB medicines can benefit all populations, that better preventive treatments reach those at highest risk, and that testing is quick, accurate, and available where it is needed most so people do not continue to fall ill and die from a preventable and curable disease.

Key highlights:

 **multidisease diagnostic testing machines for TB that can test for new pathogens including COVID-19**

1st **TB medication specifically formulated for children**

1st **preventative treatment for multidrug-resistant TB for children**

40% **price reduction for faster and more accurate TB diagnostic technology to identify drug resistance**

Oxygen

Medical oxygen is a lifesaving medicine with no substitute, but fewer than 50% of health facilities in many low- and middle- income countries have uninterrupted access. Every year, 25 million deaths are linked to conditions treatable with medical oxygen. Sustainable oxygen systems are a building block for health system strengthening, universal health coverage and pandemic prevention, preparedness and response.

To address the critical shortages of medical oxygen during the COVID-19 pandemic, Unitaid and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria launched the Oxygen Emergency Taskforce as part of the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator, which raised more than US\$1 billion to boost access to medical oxygen, expand production, negotiate for better pricing, and provide technical advice to governments. To continue this critical work, Unitaid and the Global Fund co-founded and now co-chair the Global Oxygen Alliance (GO₂AL), a partnership of 19 health partners and representatives from civil society and communities.

Photo: We helped bring to market two innovative, low-cost devices that enable newborns and young children to access oxygen therapy: an oxygen blender – a machine used to deliver the right amount of oxygen to young children; and a bubble continuous positive airway pressure (bCPAP) device (photo) – a non-invasive way of ventilating newborns who are struggling to breathe.

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Key oxygen highlights:



22% price reduction for liquid oxygen and 43% price reduction for cylinders and cylinder filling through the Oxygen Emergency Taskforce during COVID-19

1st

First ever “Road to Oxygen” national oxygen scale-up framework meeting in Senegal in 2024 to support countries to develop national oxygen plans



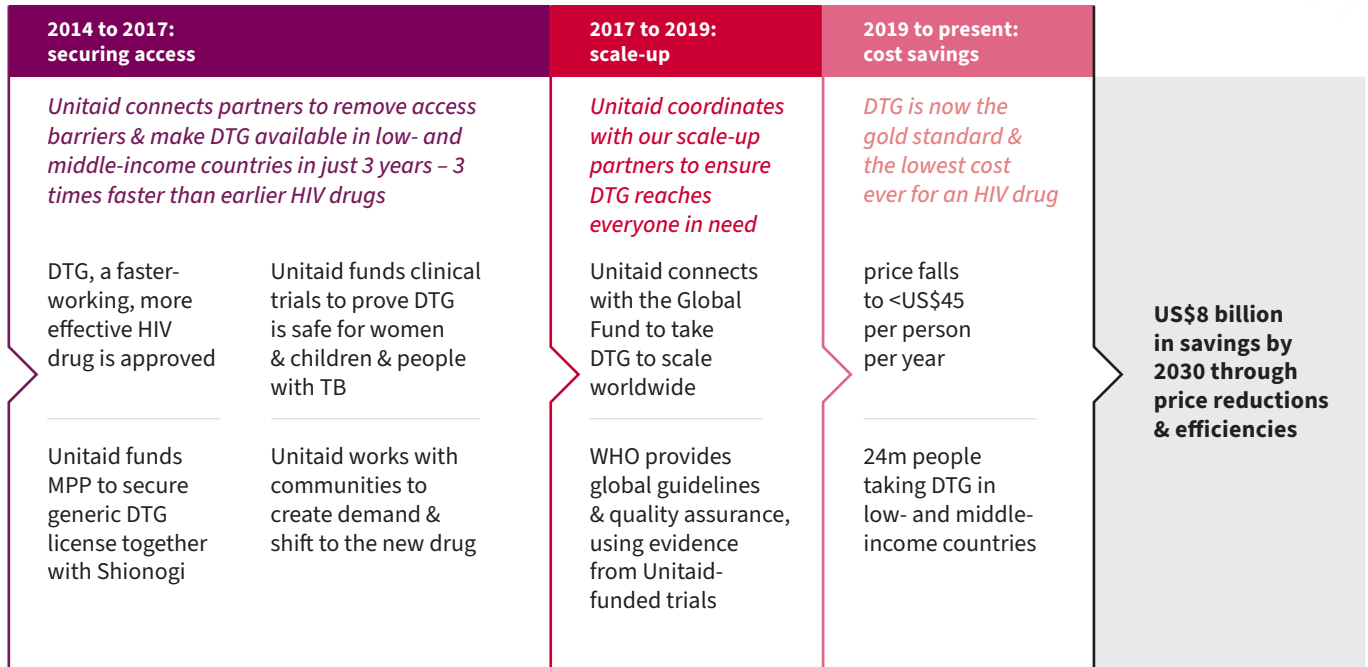
Photo: In 2024, Japan committed US\$7.3 million to expand access to reliable, sustainable supplies of liquid medical oxygen in Kenya and Tanzania to strengthen health systems and help countries prepare for future pandemics. Liquid medical oxygen, stored in tanks like this one at the Levy Mwanawasa University Hospital in Lusaka, Zambia, is more stable, easier to handle and 20% less expensive on a per-unit basis than oxygen produced through other systems like pressure swing adsorption plants. © Eva Nathanson/Unitaid

A critical partner in the global health architecture

To fight diseases like HIV, TB and malaria and achieve universal health coverage, countries and scale-up partners need better, faster, cost-effective medicines, diagnostic tests and health products. That’s why Unitaid’s role in the global health architecture is vital; our innovations help the whole global health sector reach more people, more quickly. For example, a joint study with the Global Fund showed that by fast-tracking the development of the most effective, affordable products, Unitaid helps the Global Fund accelerate progress towards global HIV, TB and malaria targets by more than three years.

By connecting a range of partners – researchers, manufacturers, health organizations – we can achieve far more than the sum of our parts. Our partnership with the Medicines Patent Pool, which Unitaid founded in 2010, helps deliver lower-cost, generic versions of lifesaving health products like the best-in-class HIV drug dolutegravir, which makes health funding go even further. Unitaid works closely with the Global Health Innovative Technology Fund (GHIT) to help bridge the gap between the research and development phase and ensuring people have access to treatments for TB, malaria and Chagas disease. And in 2024, Unitaid proudly joined the Impact Investment Initiative for Global Health (Triple I for GH), a landmark effort spearheaded by Japan to leverage impact investment for global health.

Accelerating access to a new, best-in-class HIV drug – three times faster



Japanese industry engagement

Unitaid partners with world-leading Japanese companies to deliver results and impact. Unitaid invests in different stages of the health product access value chain, typically from late-stage clinical development to product scale-up, on areas including clinical research, quality assurance, operational delivery models, demand generation, shaping supply chains, and demonstrating affordability and cost-effectiveness of health products and approaches.

- **Otsuka Pharmaceutical Co.:** Unitaid funded operational and clinical research for delamanid, a shorter, more effective treatment for multidrug-resistant TB.
- **Fujifilm:** Unitaid is supporting Fujifilm to pioneer a urine-based point-of-care TB test for people living with HIV, enabling people to be tested and diagnosed at their local health center or even at home – helping find and treat the millions of people with TB that are undiagnosed and untreated every year.

- **Shionogi & Co.:** In addition to DTG (see diagram above), Unitaid supported MPP to secure the generic license for cabotegravir long-acting (LA), an injectable form of HIV prevention, and for ensitrelvir, a COVID-19 treatment, both created by Shionogi.
- **Sumitomo Chemical Co.:** Unitaid funded the development of SumiShield, a next-generation indoor residual spray for malaria control by Sumitomo, reducing mosquito resistance.

The way forward

As an investor, influencer, and pathfinder, Unitaid mobilizes resources to make investments addressing complex global health problems in ways that ensure and accelerate equitable access to better health products and approaches to all. We look forward to continuing to work in close partnership with the Government of Japan to strengthen health systems and to contribute together to the global health target of universal health coverage.