



Press Release

GHIT Fund Kick-Started Emergency Product Development Support for Ebola Disease Outbreak Caused by Bundibugyo Virus

Urgent Request for Proposals (RFP) Framework for Rapid Diagnostic Tests and Point-of-Care Diagnostics

TOKYO, JAPAN (June 17, 2026) — The Global Health Innovative Technology (GHIT) Fund has rapidly started an emergency framework to accelerate product development support and funding in response to the Ebola disease outbreak caused by the Bundibugyo virus in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This initiative aims to support the development of rapid and point-of-care diagnostic technologies that can contribute to rapid detection, local containment, and regional preparedness in affected and at-risk countries.

Following the World Health Organization's (WHO) declaration of a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) on May 17, 2026 (JST), the GHIT Fund initiated a landscaping assessment and information exchange on May 22 and concurrently opened a call for Expressions of Interest (EOI).

Background: The Ebola Disease Outbreak

Ebola disease is a highly fatal viral illness with an average mortality rate of approximately 50%. It is transmitted to humans from wild animals and spreads through direct contact with blood, secretions, or organs of infected individuals, as well as contaminated materials such as bedding and clothing.¹ The current outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda is caused by the Bundibugyo virus, a distinct species in the Ebola family for which there are currently no approved rapid diagnostics, therapeutics, or vaccines. According to the WHO, as of 13 June 2026, the outbreak has escalated to 695 confirmed cases (including 138 deaths) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda, underscoring the urgent need for immediate containment.²

The GHIT Fund's Role and Response

When confronting highly contagious and lethal viruses, the top priority is rapid, early-stage diagnosis to enable prompt isolation and treatment. The GHIT Fund plays a pivotal role in accelerating product development to deliver solutions to medical frontlines, where every moment counts. It does so by fostering collaborations between global partners and Japanese companies, universities, and research institutions that pioneer innovative diagnostic technologies. Demand is especially high for Rapid Diagnostic Tests (RDTs) that can perform reliably in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), where electricity and advanced laboratory infrastructure are often limited. The GHIT Fund is prepared to consider fast-tracked financial support (grants) for eligible proposals, subject to expedited review and approval.

In direct response to this public health emergency, the GHIT Fund is accepting applications for RDT and point-of-care diagnostic development for filovirus infections, including Ebola disease, under the



existing RFP framework, for which proposals may be submitted outside the standard RFP timeline as part of the GHIT Fund's expedited response measures.³

Details regarding this Request for Proposal (RFP) and the application process are available on the GHIT Fund website:

GHIT-RFP-TRP-2026-001: Pandemic Preparedness and Response Award

<https://www.ghitfund.org/applyforfunding/trppast/en>

¹ WHO Ebola disease Factsheet

https://www.who.int/health-topics/ebola#tab=tab_1

² World Health Organization (13 June 2026). Disease Outbreak News; Ebola disease caused by Bundibugyo virus, Democratic Republic of the Congo & Uganda. Available at: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/disease-outbreak-news/item/2026-DON607>

³ This expedited application process does not constitute a guarantee of financial support. Funding consideration will be conducted through the formal application and evaluation process under the Pandemic Preparedness and Response Award. To ensure a swift response, investment (grant) decisions will be finalized through an expedited review involving rigorous evaluation of submitted application materials.

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The GHIT Fund is a Japan-based international public-private partnership (PPP) fund that was formed between the Government of Japan, multiple pharmaceutical companies, the Gates Foundation, Wellcome, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The GHIT Fund invests in and manages an R&D portfolio of development partnerships aimed at addressing neglected diseases, such as malaria, tuberculosis, and neglected tropical diseases, which afflict the world's vulnerable and underserved populations. In collaboration with global partners, the GHIT Fund mobilizes Japanese industry, academia, and research institutes to create new drugs, vaccines, and diagnostics for malaria, tuberculosis, and neglected tropical diseases.

<https://www.ghitfund.org/>