

Press Release

GHIT Fund and the Medicines Patent Pool Strengthen Ties to Improve Access to Medicines

Tokyo, Japan and Geneva, Switzerland — October 30, 2023 — The Global Health Innovative Technology Fund (Headquarter: Tokyo, Japan; CEO: Dr. Osamu Kunii, “GHIT Fund”) and the Medicines Patent Pool (Headquarter: Geneva, Switzerland; Executive Director: Charles Gore; “MPP”), a United Nations-backed public health organization, today announced that they have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to strengthen their collaboration to improve access to medicines.

The GHIT Fund has invested in the research and development of drugs, vaccines, and diagnostics to manage and address infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, malaria, and neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), which are highly prevalent in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). In the 10 years since its inception, the GHIT Fund has invested in more than 120 projects with a cumulative investment amount of more than 30 billion Japanese yen. MPP is working to increase equitable access to innovative medicines and other health technologies through public health-oriented voluntary licensing and technology transfer. MPP negotiates licensing agreements with innovator pharmaceutical companies, and then sublicenses to selected generic manufacturing partners to develop and supply affordable, quality-assured versions of innovative treatments to reach LMICs sooner. By the end of 2022, MPP had enabled the supply of 34.69 billion doses of essential medicines across 148 countries.

The partnership between the two organizations is designed to help improve global access to products especially in LMICs. MPP’s expertise in licensing and technology transfer for essential health products, and its stated commitment to working more closely with funders, research institutions, and universities around the world as part of MPP’s 2023-2025 strategy to support equitable access, complements GHIT Fund’s third five-year plan, GHIT 3.0, which aims to improve access and delivery of innovative medical products. This collaboration will also contribute to effective technology transfer in global health. In line with the GHIT Fund’s access policy, it will also streamline technology transfer processes and promote effective deployments of innovative medical technologies.

Through this partnership, MPP will provide its support as an implementing partner at GHIT Fund’s request where voluntary licensing and technology transfer may be a viable mechanism for identified health technologies. Furthermore, the GHIT Fund and MPP will share knowledge and perspectives on access-oriented licensing and other issues relating to affordable access medical technologies in LMICs and will identify opportunities for further collaboration.

“The GHIT Fund does not only invest in research and development, but also contributes to access and delivery of drugs, vaccines, and diagnostics to those people in need in LMICs through partnerships. The partnership and collaboration with MPP are essential to maximize the impact of our R&D innovations.” said Dr. Osamu Kunii, CEO of the GHIT Fund.

“MPP is committed to facilitating affordable access to innovative health technologies for people in need in LMICs. We look forward to working with the GHIT Fund and its grantees to support affordable access to health technologies through licensing and technology transfer to suitable manufacturers in LMICs, where needed,” said Charles Gore, Executive Director of MPP.

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About the GHIT Fund

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 Bill & Melinda 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/en>

About MPP

The Medicines Patent Pool (MPP) is a United Nations-backed public health organisation working to increase access to and facilitate the development of life-saving medicines for low- and middle-income countries. Through its innovative business model, MPP partners with civil society, governments, international organisations, industry, patient groups, and other stakeholders to prioritise and license needed medicines and pool intellectual property to encourage generic manufacture and the development of new formulations. To date, MPP has signed agreements with 20 patent holders for 13 HIV antiretrovirals, one HIV technology platform, three hepatitis C direct-acting antivirals, a tuberculosis treatment, a cancer treatment, four long-acting technologies, three oral antiviral treatments for COVID-19 and 15 COVID-19 technologies. MPP was founded by Unitaid, which continues to be MPP's main funder. MPP's work on access to essential medicines is also funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). MPP's activities in COVID-19 are undertaken with the financial support of the Japanese Government, the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, the German Agency for International Cooperation and SDC. More information at <https://medicinespatentpool.org/> and follow us on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).