

Press Release

Partnership established to advance WHO's Road map for Neglected Tropical Diseases 2021-2030

TOKYO, JAPAN and GENEVA, SWITZERLAND (December 11, 2024) — The Global Health Innovative Technology (GHIT) Fund and the World Health Organization (WHO) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to further expand their partnership to promote access to safe, effective and affordable drugs, vaccines and diagnostics in the area of neglected tropical diseases (NTDs).

The MoU makes provision for four areas of collaboration: (i) research and development aimed at strengthening the arsenal of innovative tools, treatments and interventions for NTDs; (ii) resource mobilization, notably through the development of an NTD investment case toolkit and sustainable procurement systems; (iii) advocacy and awareness, to raise the profile of NTDs within global and local health agendas; and (iv) participation of GHIT as observers in NTD working groups and task forces convened by WHO.

"This new partnership between GHIT and WHO represents a significant step forward in the fight against neglected tropical diseases," said Dr Ibrahima Socé Fall, Director, WHO Global Neglected Tropical Diseases Programme. "By joining forces we are not only accelerating research and development but also building sustainable frameworks and funding mechanisms needed to eliminate these diseases."

The GHIT Fund and WHO have been actively involved in discussions and collaborations focused on developing and launching new products targeting neglected tropical diseases in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). Through this partnership, GHIT and WHO will continue to work in close collaboration to advance the goals and targets in WHO's roadmap for neglected tropical diseases 2021–2030, in addition to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). WHO's roadmap for NTDs sets global targets and milestones for the prevention, control, elimination and eradication of 21 NTDs and disease groups by 2030 and beyond.

The GHIT Fund invests in new product development of drugs, vaccines and diagnostics for malaria, tuberculosis and NTDs and contributes to global health by facilitating collaborations between Japanese technology and innovation and global institutions to address these diseases.

Dr Osamu Kunii, CEO of the GHIT Fund, states, "Through this new partnership with WHO, we aim to advance the efforts of the Nagasaki Outcome Statement developed at the Symposium for G7 Health Ministers' Meeting in May 2023 to accelerate R&D, access and delivery for NTDs efforts."



About WHO

Founded in 1948, the World Health Organization (WHO) is the directing and coordinating authority on international health within the United Nations system. The objective of WHO is the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health. Health, as defined in the WHO Constitution, is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Working with 194 Member States across 6 regions and on the ground in 150+ locations, the WHO team is dedicated to improve everyone's ability to enjoy good health and well-being.

<https://www.who.int/>

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, the 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>