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ASIA EDITION

Japan's GHIT invests $6.8 M in product development for Malaria, NTDs and Ebola

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As of September 30, 2026, there are 53 ongoing projects, including 26 discovery projects, 14 preclinical projects, and 13 clinical trials5 in the GHIT Fund's portfolio



Japan-based Global Health Innovative Technology (GHIT) Fund has announced a total investment of approximately JPY 1.06 billion ($6.8 million) in nine R&D projects for the development of drugs, vaccines and diagnostics for malaria, neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) and emerging & re-emerging infectious diseases such as Ebola disease.

The GHIT Fund has decided to invest approximately 450 million yen in a project to develop a rapid diagnostic test for trachoma, led by Drugs and Diagnostics for Tropical Diseases (DDTD), Medical & Biological Laboratories (MBL), The Carter Center, and Big Eye Diagnostics, Inc. Supported by the GHIT Fund since 2024, the project aims to establish a diagnostic test that fully complies with the WHO Target Product Profile (TPP). This new investment will further accelerate clinical evaluations, regulatory approvals, and programmatic launch.

Rapid diagnosis is essential to prevent transmission, and the GHIT Fund has decided to invest a total of approximately JPY 210 million ($1.3 million) in three projects for the rapid diagnosis of Ebola disease-

1) Development of a new RT-LAMP/nucleic acid chromatography diagnostic device for rapid screening of for the Bundibugyo virus led by Medical & Biological Laboratories and Nagasaki University in Japan.

2) Development and field investigation of a lateral flow immunoassay for the Ebola hemorrhagic fever Bundibugyo strain in the DRC led by Saitama University in Japan.

3) Development of a LAMP-based assay for detection of Bundibugyo virus (BDBV) led by Eiken Chemical in Japan.

In addition, the GHIT Fund will invest a total of approximately JPY 400 million (approx. $2.5 million) in the following five R&D projects-

- Construct and formulation optimisation and efficacy evaluation of a bivalent mRNA-lipid nanoparticle vaccine for Lassa virus led by the University of Osaka (Center for Advanced Modalities and Drug Delivery System [CAMaD], Research Institute for Microbial Diseases [RIMD], and Graduate School of Medicine [UOsaka Med]) and The University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB).

- Strategic high-performance immunoglobulins for epidemic and lethal diseases, and to develop a highly accurate rapid antigen test (RAT) for detecting Nipah virus (NiV) and Hendra virus (HeV) infections, both of which have the potential to cause severe outbreaks, led by PATH and iBody Inc.
- Improving antimalarial potency of antisense oligonucleotides through bioinformatics and machine-learning algorithms led by Eisai and Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV).
- Innovative approaches to improve success rate in Chagas disease drug discovery led by Nagasaki University, Eisai, Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative and University of Dundee.
- Rapid whole-blood multiplex antigen test for serotype-specific dengue and chikungunya detection led by VisGene, University of Miyazaki, Mahidol University, Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos in Peru and Centro de Investigaciones Tecnologicas, Biomedicas y Medioambientales in Peru.