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Beijing Genomics Institute, Gates foundation to collaborate

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BGI, Gates Foundation to collaborate on healthcare



Singapore: The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with China-headquartered BGI to form a collaboration on global health and agricultural development. The collaboration hopes to achieve common objectives in health and agricultural development, and contribute towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

The signing ceremony was attended by Dr Jian Wang, director and co-founder of BGI, Dr Jun Wang, executive director, BGI, and Mr Bill Gates of the Gates Foundation.

BGI and the Gates Foundation will collaborate on both a strategic level and specific project level. Collaboration on specific projects will leverage the Gates Foundation's agriculture and global health program knowledge and networks with BGI's sequencing and genomics capabilities for improving healthcare in the developing world. Strategic objectives include identifying a program of work and collaboration across global health and agricultural development.

The agreement supports the prompt and broad dissemination of information from collaboration projects. It also supports broad access to any technology arising from a project. These technologies will be required to be made available at a reasonable cost to the poor.

"BGI greatly welcomes this opportunity to partner with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to bring the benefit of genomics research to our global society," said Dr Huanming Yang, chairman and co-founder of BGI. "We are confident that the combination of our respective capabilities, expertise and experience will yield important scientific breakthroughs in the areas of human, plant and animal genomics that will contribute to the advancement of sustainable health and agriculture development, especially in the developing world."

"We work closely with partners like BGI to enable breakthroughs in science that will prevent disease and improve agriculture so that farm families can become self-sufficient, reducing hunger and poverty," said Dr Trevor Mundel, president of the Global Health Program at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

This partnership will be operationalized immediately, with the establishment of a management committee that will support identification and implementation of collaborations on global health and agricultural development projects.