

Japan-based GHIT Fund invests \$8.8 M in new drug development projects for malaria

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This is the first time GHIT Fund has invested in a research project led by a Chinese pharmaceutical company



The Global Health Innovative Technology (GHIT) Fund, headquartered in Japan, has announced an investment of approximately 1.3 billion yen (\$8.8 million) for the development of new drugs for malaria and Chagas disease.

This is the first investment by the GHIT Fund in a general trading company, Marubeni Corporation, and a pharmaceutical company in China, Shanghai Fosun Pharmaceutical Industrial Development Co., with the aim of accelerating the development of new drugs by focusing on investments in late-phase clinical trials.

The GHIT Fund will invest approximately 500 million yen (\$3.3 million) in a clinical phase III trial for a triple artemisinin combination drug against malaria, in partnership with a leading Japanese integrated trading and investment business conglomerate, Marubeni, a major Chinese pharmaceutical and health care company, Fosun Pharma, a Thailand-based research collaboration of universities, Mahidol-Oxford Tropical Medicine Research Unit (MORU), and the product development partnership Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV), which provides technical support and market access expertise.

The GHIT Fund will also invest approximately 800 million yen (\$5.4 million) in the anti-malarial drug project by Eisai Co., and the University of Kentucky to develop a radical cure for *P. vivax* malaria. SJ733, an antimalarial drug candidate, has completed a Phase IIa trial for single administration and has shown efficacy and tolerability against *P. vivax* malaria. With this new investment, the project aims to shorten the treatment period by using SJ733 in combination with the existing drug tafenoquine.

In addition, the GHIT Fund will invest approximately 16 million yen (\$0.1 million) in Nagasaki University and Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi) for a screening project against Chagas disease, which is one of the neglected tropical diseases.