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**For immediate release**

## **Breakthrough 100 minute test – a revolution in the fight against tuberculosis and AIDS**

Yesterday the World Health Organization (WHO) endorsed a new technology that could completely revolutionize the fight against tuberculosis (TB), one of the biggest killer diseases on the planet.

The breakthrough technology is called *Xpert MTB/RIF* and enables diagnosis time to be slashed from up to 75 days down to one hundred minutes. This will allow patients to start appropriate treatment in hours as opposed to weeks or even months. With a typical TB patient infecting 10-15 other people in the course of a year, rapid diagnosis and rapid treatment means halting the disease in its tracks.

*Xpert* also provides an accurate diagnosis of TB without the previously needed sophisticated lab. It detects many cases that are missed by the currently used one hundred-year-old technology of having a human searching for TB germs under a microscope.

Given the fact that tuberculosis is also the leading killer of people living with HIV/AIDS, and that the old technology is unable to detect TB in most people living with HIV, the new test is also the newest weapon in the fight against AIDS.

Dr Steve Graham, tuberculosis expert at the Centre for International Child Health says “*Xpert* has to be the most promising public health breakthrough for tuberculosis in half a century.”

Tuberculosis kills 1.7 million people each year with many of the high burden TB countries being our Asia Pacific neighbours.

National Manager of anti poverty advocacy group RESULTS, Maree Nutt says: “Aid donors like Australia can also lead the way in helping introduce and scale up *Xpert* to help combat this age old disease.”

*Xpert* is produced by Cepheid, a biotech company in California, and is self-contained and easy to use.

### **ENDS**

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**RESULTS International (Australia)** [www.results.org.au](http://www.results.org.au) engages in grassroots advocacy with members around the country. It is one of nine partner organisations in **ACTION (Advocacy to Control TB Internationally)** [www.action.org](http://www.action.org)

**ACTION** is an international partnership of civil society advocates working to mobilize resources to treat and prevent the spread of tuberculosis (TB), a global disease that kills one person every 20 seconds.