



# PHSP IMPROVES DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF TUBERCULOSIS IN ADDIS ABABA AND BAHIRDAR BY USING GENE X-PERT MTB/RIF TESTS

## PRIVATE HEALTH SECTOR PROJECT



The Private Health Sector Project (PHSP) is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and aims to improve the provision of critical public health services by engaging private sector health facilities to deliver high quality care at an affordable cost in Ethiopia

Gene X-pert testing has revolutionized tuberculosis (TB) diagnosis by providing accurate, reliable, and fast identification of TB and multidrug-resistant TB (MDRTB) in only a few hours. The fast turnaround time enables patients to start treatment on the same day. This method improves the chances of successful treatment and reduces TB transmission.

In Ethiopia, most of the 113 health facilities that have Gene X-pert machines are public. This means that the majority of private health facilities rely on microscopy test which cannot determine if the bacteria is drug-resistance and results take a few days. To increase access to Gene X-pert testing, the USAID-funded Private Health Sector Project (PHSP) provided Gene X-pert machines to two private hospitals in Addis Ababa and Bahirdar through a public private partnership approach.

PHSP facilitated an agreement between private hospitals with their respective regional health bureau (RHB). As a result, the RHB started providing technical support, Gene X-pert cartages, specimen collection materials, External Quality Assessments (EQA), Gene X-pert machine

maintenance services, and capacity building trainings to private clinics supported by PHSP.

Between January 2018 and December 2019, a total of 2,388 presumptive TB cases were diagnosed using Gene X-pert machines in two private health facilities of which *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* was detected in 10.2% (243/2388) of cases and multidrug resistance was detected in 1% (23/2388) of cases attending the hospital.

Ms. Beza Hailu, owner and Managing Director of Teklehaymanot General Hospital, explained “Before the establishment of Gene X-pert test, clients moved to different health facilities and waited for long period of times –even more than a week. After the setup of the machine, patients received same day quality results. Without any profit, the test costs Birr 100 per test but the hospital agreed to Birr 50 per test because the aim of the hospital is to support patients & meet its social responsibility by serving the community.” – Ms. Beza Hailu.

Dr. Medhanit Abera is an Internist who has served more than 12 years in various institutions. She believes “The use of microscopy by unskilled laboratory technicians prevents TB detection but the availability of highly sensitive Gene X-pert tests at Teklehaymanot hospital has helped a lot in the detection of TB cases that may have been missed with microscopy tests. This high technology test has a great impact in patient management.”

The availability of Gene X-pert machines at private health facilities has allowed Ethiopians to get tested, diagnosed, and start treatment on the same day. The establishment of Gene X-pert machines at private health clinics has enhanced access to high-quality testing, improved early diagnosis and better management of MTB/ MDR TB cases, reduced costs incurred by patients, and contributed in reducing TB in the country.



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