

# TIME FOR \$5



 The "Time for \$5" campaign calls on the diagnostic corporation Cepheid and its parent corporation Danaher to drop the price of their lifesaving tests to \$5, so many more people around the world can get access to disease diagnosis and timely treatment.



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## What is the "Time for \$5" campaign?

- "Time for \$5" is a campaign advocating for improved affordability and access to lifesaving GeneXpert tests in low- and middle-income countries.
- The GeneXpert diagnostic testing technology by the US corporation Cepheid has revolutionised rapid, accurate diagnosis of tuberculosis (TB), the deadliest infectious disease in the world, as well as other diseases. MSF uses these tests routinely in medical programmes around the globe.
- Yet, **due to the high price of the GeneXpert test cartridges, many low- and middle-income countries cannot scale up testing** for all people who need diagnosis.
- MSF analysis has shown that it costs Cepheid less than US\$5 to manufacture one GeneXpert test, but Cepheid charges MSF and low-and-middle-income countries 2-4 times that price, depending on the disease.

## Who are Cepheid and Danaher?

- **Cepheid is a diagnostics corporation based in the US.** It is best known for GeneXpert, a testing technology which enables rapid diagnosis of many infectious diseases.
- **Cepheid is a subsidiary of the financial investment corporation Danaher**, which ranked 132nd on the Fortune 500 list and reported revenues of more than \$31 billion in 2023.
- **Cepheid received over \$250 million in public funding**, primarily from the US government, for the research and development of GeneXpert – that's a QUARTER BILLION TAXPAYER DOLLARS.



## IT IS TIME FOR \$5

We call on Cepheid and Danaher to prioritise people over profits and reduce the price of GeneXpert tests to \$5, so many more lives can be saved.

## What is GeneXpert?

- Cepheid's **GeneXpert test can detect TB in just one hour** - that's much faster and more accurate than older methods that can take a few weeks.
- In addition to TB, there are GeneXpert tests for HIV, hepatitis, COVID, Ebola, cervical cancer, and sexually transmitted diseases.
- **GeneXpert is a crucial tool for MSF, other treatment providers, and countries for diagnosing people** with TB and other diseases to get them on treatment quickly.



## What are we asking for?

- Given the huge public funding Cepheid received for the development of GeneXpert, the estimated cost of producing each test, and the exponential growth in sales volumes since 2012, Cepheid's decision to charge high prices for its tests is unconscionable.
- **IT IS TIME FOR \$5: We call on Cepheid and Danaher to prioritise people's lives over maximising profits by dropping the price of all GeneXpert tests to \$5.**
- This \$5 price will allow governments to scale up lifesaving testing while still being profitable for Cepheid.

### MSF and TB

MSF is the largest non-governmental provider of TB treatment worldwide and has been involved in TB care for 30 years, often working alongside national health authorities to treat people in various settings, including conflict zones, urban slums, prisons, refugee camps and rural areas.

In 2022, MSF treated more than 17,000 people with TB, including 2,300 people with drug-resistant TB, in over 60 TB projects in 41 countries.

## How much does GeneXpert cost?

- **MSF estimates each GeneXpert test costs between \$3 to \$4.60 to produce**, according to a study we commissioned in 2018. Cepheid has not been transparent about how much it costs to produce each test.
- But Cepheid prices the GeneXpert TB test at about \$10 in 145 high-burden countries, including those with the greatest numbers of people with TB. At \$10 per test, it is simply too expensive for many countries to roll out testing at the scale required to reach all people with TB.
- Other GeneXpert tests are even more expensive: tests for HIV, hepatitis, COVID, cervical cancer, and sexually transmitted diseases are priced at about \$15 each, and Ebola tests are priced at about \$20 apiece.
- **So Cepheid is charging low- and middle-income countries a mark-up of at least 100% for TB tests, and 200-300% mark-ups on other disease tests.**



The "Time for \$5" campaign is coordinated by the MSF Access Campaign together with more than 150 civil society organisations working to improve access to TB diagnosis and treatment.