Early Diagnosis of Cervical Cancer in Africa

Cervical cancer occurs when the cells in the cervix replicate in an abnormal and uncontrolled way.

Almost all cervical cancers are caused by two types of human papillomavirus (HPV).

Cervical cancer is the leading cause of cancer mortality among women in Africa.

92,400 women in Africa diagnosed annually
56,000 women die

Cervical cancer is preventable
Vaccination against HPV and routine screenings can prevent the majority of cases of the disease.

With timely detection and effective treatment, cervical cancer can usually be cured.

Up to 95% of cancer patients in African countries are diagnosed at late- or end-stage disease.

Barriers to detection and treatment of cervical cancer include:
- Lack of cervical cancer control policies
- Low levels of cervical cancer awareness in population and health workers
- Lack of recent and comprehensive data

The partnership between WHO, AFRO, and IFPMA:
- Encourages women to seek cervical cancer screening and medical help in case of early symptoms. Provides health workers appropriate information and skill on cervical cancer to meet the needs of all women.
- Focus is on four countries with a high burden of cervical cancer and significant gaps in prevention and control.

Support training
- Distributes training materials for health workers and officials on the importance of screening and early detection.

Counseling materials
- Develops counseling materials for primary health workers to advise women on procedures for cervical cancer screening and early detection programs.

Building awareness
- Promotes public education materials in major local languages to provide recommendations for prevention, screening and early diagnosis of cervical cancer at community level.

World Health Organization African Region (WHO AFRO) and the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA) support the efforts of African Ministries of Health to meet the global commitment to a 25% reduction of preventative death from non-communicable diseases (NCDs) by 2025.