The Commonwealth is disproportionately affected by cervical cancer:

- Although the Commonwealth represents 30% of the global population, it has 40% of the world’s cervical cancer cases and 43% of the mortality.
- Most Commonwealth countries are low- and middle-income economies (LMIC) and survival rates for cervical cancer are lower in these countries than those with higher income.

Patients in Commonwealth LMIC are presenting with advanced cancers and correspondingly lower chances of survival for various reasons such as, distance, poverty, human resource issues, lack of equipped treatment centres, absence of vaccination, screening and early detection, as well as poor awareness.

In the Commonwealth, cancer incidence and mortality are estimated to increase at a higher rate than the global average between now and 2030. If nothing is done between now and 2030, new cervical cancer cases could rise by 55% and deaths by 62% - meaning a woman dying of cervical cancer in the Commonwealth every three minutes.

Thus, since 2017, Commonwealth health ministers have been calling for collective action to address cervical cancer, including reducing the cost and shortages of vaccines.

And there is hope:

- Australia and Rwanda, Commonwealth countries at different development stages, have made commendable progress towards eliminating cervical cancer - they have demonstrated the value of turning political commitment to action at the highest level.

The Commonwealth therefore fully supports the Director-General’s report on Accelerating the elimination of cervical cancer as a global public health problem.

THANK YOU