

**Statement by The Republic of Rwanda
on
Resumed sessions of WHA73 (9–14 November 2020) and EB147 (16 November)**

**Agenda 11.4
Accelerating the elimination of cervical cancer as a global public health
problem**

Rwanda's health system interventions have always been built on a multisectoral approach, a human right approach, an equity-based approach, and most importantly an evidence-based approach. Accordingly, since 2011, Rwanda successfully introduced the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccine nationwide, achieving near-universal access to it through a strategic, collaborative, and multisectoral campaign. A high political will and engagement combined by community support and strong partners have helped Rwanda achieve a coverage rate of 97% for the HPV vaccine in young girls aged 12 years by 2019. We are committed to keeping the vaccination coverage levels high, as it is a strong pillar to achieve the elimination of cervical cancer.

Rwanda is now poised to speed up the roll out of cervical cancer screening and treatment of pre-cancerous lesions for 30-49 years old women in all health facilities integrating them into existing services with a focus on maternal and child health and HIV services. We thank our partners that are supporting our efforts to introduce the new HPV DNA testing screening strategy to improve VIA based screening strategy that has been implemented in different health facilities since 2014. We are optimistic to achieve the second elimination target even before 2030.

We confirm Rwanda's commitment to upgrading the national cancer treatment capacity, through establishing cancer centres of excellence run by well-trained oncology personnel with a goal of treating Rwandans in Rwanda by Rwandans. We are confident that with these new developments in improving cancer treatment capacity together with our strong health insurance schemes, we will be able to provide a quality treatment to 90% of women with invasive cervical cancer by 2030.

All of which has been clearly articulated in the National Cancer Control Plan 2019-2024 and NCD Strategy and Costed Action plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs (2020–2025)

The sustainability to keep the HPV vaccination coverage high, screening tools and consumables, and treatment of cervical cancer cases is still a challenge and the way forward to achieving UHC for cervical cancer care is still long. Hence, we invite partners to support our efforts towards the elimination of cervical cancer and together show to the world that it is possible to end cervical cancer.

Finally, we would like again to endorse and support the global strategy to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer and call upon development actors, vaccine manufacturers, civil society organisations, researchers, and health professionals to

learn from our experience with the HPV vaccine to advance all other universal health coverage goals. Rwanda stands ready to support and share experience with countries in Africa and further in all other LMICs to help them advance and walk together towards the elimination of cervical cancer.

Thank you

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