Cervical Cancer In Zambia: The Impact of a Prevention Programme

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The likelihood that a woman with cervical cancer will die from her disease is higher in Zambia than anywhere else in the world (cervical cancer mortality rate 38.6/100,000). In response to this crisis situation we initiated the Cervical Cancer Prevention Program in Zambia (CCPPZ) in 2006. A contextually based cancer prevention format embedded in a matrix of modern mobile technology, its hallmarks are:

• Nurse-led single-visit “screen and treat” services in government-operated clinics
• Digital cervicography as an adjunct to VIA
• Telemedicine for immediate consultation
• The use of traditional social infrastructures (traditional healers, traditional marriage counselors, chiefs and chieftainesses) for community sensitization.

Since its initiation prevention units have been established in each of the country’s 10 provinces, over 125,000 women have been screened and 335 healthcare workers from 13 African countries have been trained to use the “screen and treat” method. The Pink Ribbon Red Ribbon (PRRR) Public Private Partnership was launched in Zambia in December 2011 and a school-based HPV vaccination demonstration project rolled out in March 2013. We will discuss the basis of these achievements as well as pitfalls and future challenges.