

BD Helps Advance Health Equity for Women in Kenya through Critical Cancer Screening

Collaboration with Kenya Ministry of Health National Cancer Institute Aims to Expand Access to Diagnostics, Reduce Cervical Cancer Rates

NAIROBI, Kenya, Jan. 25, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- BD (Becton, Dickinson and Company) (NYSE: BDX), a leading global medical technology company, today announced a collaboration with the Kenyan Government through the National Cancer Institute-Kenya to advance access to critical cancer diagnostics for women in Kenya. Through this program, BD continues to drive its commitment toward progress of advancing health equity to underserved communities around the world.

The initiative is aligned to the Ministry of Health Kenya's Cancer Control Strategy, which advocates for early detection and screening of cancers such as cervical and breast, as well as linkage to care (initial health care visit after diagnosis), and leveraging partnerships to strengthen capacity and resources for cancer care throughout the health system. The strategy seeks to address the prevention and control of all cancers and resonates with the broader effort made by the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO) which aims to eliminate cervical cancer by 2030 by achieving vaccination, screening and treatment targets.

- **Cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer among women** globally, with an estimated 604,000 new cases and 342,000 deaths in 2020. About **90%** of the new cases and deaths worldwide in 2020 occurred in **low- and middle-income countries**.ⁱ
- **Almost all cervical cancer cases (more than 95%) are linked to human papillomavirus (HPV) infection**, an extremely common virus transmitted through sexual contact.ⁱ
- In Kenya, only **one in 10 girls above age 15 years have received a full course of vaccination** against sexually transmitted HPV.ⁱⁱ
- Cervical and breast cancer are the top two female cancers in Kenya by incidence and mortality.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Only **one in 10 women in Kenya have been screened for cervical cancer** in the last five years.ⁱⁱ

"Cervical cancer is curable and preventable, and can be eliminated within our lifetimes," said Dr. Catherine Murithi, global public health leader in Africa for BD. "Vaccination, regular screening, early diagnosis, and treatment could save thousands of women's lives each year in Kenya. Cervical cancer symptoms develop slowly over time and often do not appear until the disease has reached an advanced state, which is why regular screening is so important—and so effective.

Dr. Murithi continued, "BD welcomes this opportunity to partner with the Kenya Ministry of Health and County governments to help reduce rates of cervical cancer and advance the World Health Organization's Global Strategy for Cervical Cancer Elimination."

The program will be piloted in Nairobi County, with strong collaboration with the Nairobi County government, with a goal to expand throughout the country in the future. BD will support the initiative through:

- Cervical cancer awareness campaigns and health advocacy reaching local women where they work and live;
- Training community health volunteers about HPV self-sampling and distributing self-collection kits to local health clinics;
- Installing at the National Reference Laboratory in Nairobi a high-volume automated molecular diagnostic system that uses a unique test to individually identify high-risk HPV types;
- Establishing a Rapid Diagnostic Center at Mama Lucy Hospital in Nairobi; and
- Strengthening health care referral networks and linkage to care, as well as digital tracking of samples and results reporting.

Dr. Elias Melly, The Chief Executive Officer, National Cancer Institute Kenya said, "Kenya is experiencing a high burden of cancer disproportionately affecting women. The launch of this novel rapid access cancer screening and diagnosis program will help achieve our targets in reducing premature mortality from cervical and breast cancers."

Senior director of BD Global Public Health Caitlin Asjes said, "At BD, we believe our opportunity goes beyond developing meaningful health care technologies to helping ensure these innovations are available to people regardless of geography, demographics or socioeconomic status. Through this partnership, we look to reach meaningful and sustainable impact in Kenya and explore opportunity to further this program in underserved countries with comparable cancer challenges."

About BD

BD is one of the largest global medical technology companies in the world and is advancing the world of health by improving medical discovery, diagnostics and the delivery of care. The company supports the heroes on the frontlines of health care by developing innovative technology, services and solutions that help advance both clinical therapy for patients and clinical process for health care providers. BD and its more than 70,000 employees have a passion and commitment to help enhance the safety and efficiency of clinicians' care delivery process, enable laboratory scientists to accurately detect disease and advance researchers' capabilities to develop the next generation of diagnostics and therapeutics. BD has a presence in virtually every country and partners with organizations around the world to address some of the most challenging global health issues. By working in close collaboration with customers, BD can help enhance outcomes, lower costs, increase efficiencies, improve safety and expand access to health care. For more information on BD, please visit bd.com or connect with us on LinkedIn at www.linkedin.com/company/bd1/, X (formerly Twitter) [@BDandCo](https://twitter.com/BDandCo) or Instagram [@becton_dickinson](https://www.instagram.com/becton_dickinson).

i <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/cervical-cancer>

ii <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/cervical-cancer-country-profiles>

iii <https://gco.iarc.fr/today/fact-sheets-populations>

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