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## IARC launches Cervical Cancer Elimination Planning Tool to support low- and middle-income countries in planning for elimination

**Lyon, France, 7 May 2025** – To commemorate the 60th anniversary of the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), the Agency and its partners at the University of Sydney, Australia, are launching the Cervical Cancer Elimination Planning Tool (EPT)<sup>1</sup>, a publicly available online tool to enable countries to create effective, sustainable cervical cancer strategies that are specifically adapted to their unique demographic and health-care needs.

“By assisting policy-makers in planning, costing, and tailoring their cervical cancer programmes across the three pillars of the World Health Organization (WHO) global strategy – human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination, cervical screening, and treatment – the EPT provides evidence-based guidance to countries to plan their roadmap towards elimination of cervical cancer,” says Dr Isabelle Soerjomataram, Deputy Head of the IARC Cancer Surveillance Branch and lead of the IARC Initiative for Resilience in Cancer Control. “With this tool, countries can build tailored strategic plans to accelerate progress, save lives, and make the global elimination of cervical cancer a reality.”

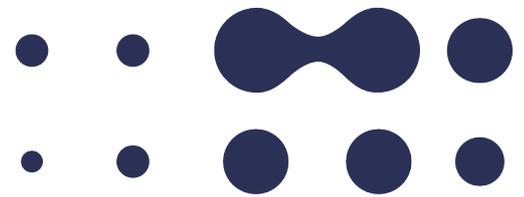
With funding from Cancer Research UK, the United Kingdom Medical Research Council, and Cancer Australia, the EPT was co-developed by the International Partnership for Resilience in Cancer Systems (<https://iparcs.org/about/>) and the IARC Initiative for Resilience in Cancer Control (<https://ircc.iarc.who.int>), which bring together the global community to support decision-making in cancer control. The partnership was originally formed as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, and has since broadened and evolved to address many different themes related to the ongoing resilience of cancer systems.

Cervical cancer kills about 350 000 women per year globally and is the fourth most common cancer type in women today. More than 90% of deaths from cervical cancer occur in low- and middle-income countries.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ervik M, Lam F, Rivas Romero DP, Simms K, Keane A, Laversanne M, et al. (2025). Cervical Cancer Elimination Planning Tool. Lyon, France: International Agency for Research on Cancer. Available from: <https://gco.iarc.who.int/ept>.

<sup>2</sup> Ferlay J, Ervik M, Lam F, Laversanne M, Colombet M, Mery L, et al. (2024). Global Cancer Observatory: Cancer Today (version 1.1). Lyon, France: International Agency for Research on Cancer. Available from: <https://gco.iarc.who.int/today>.



Cervical cancer is known to have important health impacts in many low- and middle-income countries. It also hits society hard, tearing at the fabric of families and communities and creating a terrible disease burden. “The idea of eliminating the disease can be a daunting conceptual step. However, with the EPT, which enables modelling using localized disease outcomes in relation to interventions, countries can map out a path to elimination that is evidence-based, feasible, and sustainable for their specific circumstances and enables them to track progress towards interim and long-term goals,” says Professor Karen Canfell AC, who leads the team at the University of Sydney School of Public Health that co-developed the EPT.

In November 2020, WHO formally adopted a global strategy to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem worldwide. The strategy incorporates three specific targets to be achieved by 2030 by every country: vaccinating at least 90% of adolescent girls against HPV, screening at least 70% of women aged 30–49 years with an HPV test at least twice in their lifetimes, and appropriate management of 90% of women with cervical precancer or cancer.

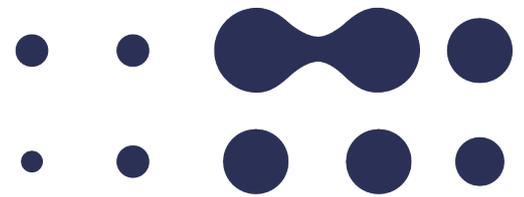
The EPT provides short-, medium-, and long-term disease burden and economic estimates of the impact of implementation of the global strategies based on the WHO 90–70–90 triple-intervention strategy across 75 low-income and lower-middle-income countries. Using the EPT, countries can access new data to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer, based on a scientifically developed tool designed to inform interventions tailored to the needs in specific regional and national settings. Using the EPT, the joint research team announces today that based on the achievements to date, 12.5 million lives will be saved in low-income and lower-middle-income countries<sup>3</sup>, which represents 20% of the total of 62 million lives that can be saved in the long term if the 2020 WHO strategy to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer can be successfully implemented.

“Sound scientific research and its translation into comprehensive high-quality services are crucial to accelerate cervical cancer elimination,” says IARC Director Dr Elisabete Weiderpass. “The EPT can inform national health decisions on integrating sustainable long-term cervical cancer elimination programmes with priority actions for saving lives today. This planning tool is a major step towards ensuring that no community is left behind in the fight to eliminate this preventable disease.”

The EPT can be accessed using this link: <https://gco.iarc.who.int/ept>

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<sup>3</sup> This is an estimate of the number of lives saved to date and in the future due to HPV vaccination penetration to date, assuming that current levels of coverage are sustained; it assumes that there is little effective penetration of programmatic HPV screening and precancer treatment in low- and middle-income countries before 2025 and that access to cancer treatment is unchanged from the present. The estimate of 62 million lives saved is based on original data for WHO modelling; see Canfell K, Kim JJ, Brisson M, Keane A, Simms KT, Caruana M, et al. (2020). Mortality impact of achieving WHO cervical cancer elimination targets: a comparative modelling analysis in 78 low-income and lower-middle-income countries. *Lancet*. 395(10224):591–603. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(20\)30157-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)30157-4) PMID:32007142



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The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) is part of the World Health Organization. Its mission is to coordinate and conduct research on the causes of human cancer, the mechanisms of carcinogenesis, and to develop scientific strategies for cancer control. The Agency is involved in both epidemiological and laboratory research and disseminates scientific information through publications, meetings, courses, and fellowships. If you wish your name to be removed from our press release emailing list, please write to [com@iarc.who.int](mailto:com@iarc.who.int).