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Government of Burundi introduces HPV vaccine to prevent cervical cancer

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Introduction of the HPV vaccine is part of a broader effort to strengthen the community health system



Under the leadership of the Ministry of Public Health and with the support of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance (Gavi), UNICEF, and the World Health Organization (WHO), Burundi has just launched, on April 29, 2026, the vaccine against the human papillomavirus (HPV), which causes cervical cancer.

This major milestone marks a decisive turning point in the fight against cervical cancer, a preventable disease that remains one of the leading causes of death among women in Burundi. From 2017 to 2022, about 1,581 new cases were diagnosed, of which 1,126 resulted in death, illustrating the scale of the public health challenge.

Globally, cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer. In Burundi, it is among the most common cancers in women and represents the leading cause of female cancer-related deaths, in terms of both incidence and mortality.

To ensure a successful, coordinated, and widely accepted rollout, the Ministry of Public Health, through the Expanded Program on Immunisation, is mobilising all stakeholders – including decision-makers, health professionals, media, community leaders, and partners – around a coherent national communication strategy and a strong multisectoral commitment. Priority is given to raising awareness and combating misinformation, to inform the public about the benefits of the vaccine and strengthen community trust.

Starting in late April 2026, HPV vaccination will be incorporated into the routine immunisation schedule for girls aged 9 to 14 in all health districts across the country. This initiative aims to ensure effective protection and significantly reduce morbidity and mortality linked to this disease.