

# AISHA: An implementation study on rapid HPV testing in the United Republic of Tanzania

## Current Project Brief

### Objectives and Background

In 2005, the WHO, with Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW) in the United Republic of Tanzania, and partners strengthened health care settings to implement cervical cancer screening and treatment based on VIA and cryotherapy. These demonstration sites and others identified by the MoHSW were considered ideal as the basis for conducting operational research to introduce new rapid HPV DNA-based screening tests for cervical cancer to improve cervical cancer prevention programmes. Compared to VIA operating at the primary, district and regional levels of the health care system, the field performance of rapid HPV testing was assessed in a variety of settings to determine its overall impact on programme performance. Objective: to assess the reproducibility, feasibility, and acceptability of rapid HPV testing at each level of the health system and to determine if it is able to perform as intended. The use of VIA and rapid HPV testing in the follow-up of treated women will be assessed at a one year follow-up visit.

### Geographic location

This is a cross-sectional, multicentric study to be carried out in 7 centres in the United Republic of Tanzania. Cervical specimens will be collected by trained providers from 255 women aged 30 to 50 attending VIA screening at 7 sites in 2 regions: Dar es Salaam region; and Kilimanjaro region. In each region, a health centre (HC), district hospital and regional hospital were included. The specimens were processed at the sites, at the regional expert laboratories and the national reference laboratory and the results were compared. The results of this phase will indicate if rapid HPV testing is a reproducible and reliable screening test when operated at different levels within the health system. Acceptability and feasibility of this test were also assessed.

### Main deliverables

Recommendations to the Ministry of Health (MoH) whether the introduction of these tests is worth for the national cervical cancer prevention and control programme, and if yes, at which level of the health system it can be used and for which purpose.

Data analysis is ongoing and several publications for peer-reviewed scientific journal are in preparation. 2012: finalization of protocol. 2013: start of recruitment. 2018: end of recruitment. 2020: final analysis.

2015 – 2016: participant recruitment. 2017: 1-year Follow-up. 2018: data analysis and publication of results

### Partners

MoH, United Republic of Tanzania.

National Reference laboratory Muhimbili University.

Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre

International Agency for Research on Cancer

### Sources of funding

HRP

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