



TOGETHER

for health



2022
YEAR IN REVIEW

Dear Supporters,

The last several years have confronted us with a list of global challenges that can often seem insurmountable. From the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, to international conflict and unrest, and to the ongoing global climate crisis, it's natural to feel a sense of despair.

Even in the field of global cervical cancer prevention, the reality is that too many women are still diagnosed with this preventable disease, and far, far too many lose their lives. Pervasive barriers – including stigma and fragmented programs – exacerbate an inadequate flow of resources, limiting access to HPV vaccination, cervical cancer screening, and lifesaving treatment.

And yet, reflecting on the milestones reached in 2022, and considering the possibilities of tomorrow, I genuinely feel inspired – if, together, we choose to commit – in the effort to permanently end this disease.

Where HPV vaccine supply has long represented a major constraint to meeting the World Health Organization (WHO) goal of achieving 90% coverage of young women, we're now seeing several new manufacturers entering the market, with the potential to reduce costs and increase the number of doses available for young people. Increased supplies will prove even more valuable thanks to research showing that a single dose of HPV vaccine provides comparable protection to the two- and three-dose regimens that have been in place since the introduction of the vaccines in 2006.

The other key prevention goal in the WHO's strategy involves ensuring that 70% of women are screened for cervical cancer with a high-performance test – ideally a molecular test to detect HPV – at ages 35 and 45. Investments by the United States government through PEPFAR to screen women living with HIV and increased investment by the multilateral partnership Unitaid reached new highs in 2021, greatly increasing the number of women receiving preventive screening and treatment.

HPV testing can often be performed through self-sampling, offering a path to achieve population-level screening goals with reduced burden for both women and health systems. Australia actually began offering all eligible women the option to self-sample in July of 2022, but progress isn't limited to high-income countries. By the end of 2022, a total of 16 African countries had introduced high-performance-based screening tests in line with these recommendations, with plans for scale-up. Unitaid-funded programs coordinated by the Clinton Health Access Initiative and the SUCCESS project are demonstrating to the world that well-equipped programs in even the most challenging settings can scale in line with the ambitious 90-70-90 goals and the 2030 targets.

It's encouraging to see these global commitments put into practice to achieve ambitious goals, saving women's lives in the near term and igniting a global generation that may be the last to ever fear a cervical cancer diagnosis.

The challenges remain massive. TogetHER for Health will continue to play our role, demanding accountability by funders and policymakers for their commitments to WHO's cervical cancer elimination strategy, investing in innovative programs that can bring prevention to scale, leveraging partnerships from rural Alabama to the streets of Nairobi, bridging the gap between the dream of elimination and the reality of lives saved.

As always, a sincere thanks to all of you working in cervical cancer prevention, saving lives today and preserving future generations. We owe it to everyone touched by this disease to keep moving forward, with optimism.

Best regards,

Heather White, Executive Director



Team retreat in Seattle, November 2022. L-R: Tom Harmon, External Relations Director; Kathy Vizas, Co-Founder/Chief Strategy Officer; Sarah Bowler, Technical Advisor; Heather White, Executive Director

Dedicated to Ending Cervical Cancer Around the World

When detected early, cervical cancer is highly preventable and treatable. Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccines are safe and protect against numerous HPV-related cancers, including cervical cancer. Cervical screening can identify precancerous cervical lesions for removal, reducing the risk of invasive disease. Making these interventions accessible to more women and girls greatly lowers the potential need to treat invasive cervical disease or provide palliative care.

Despite the existence of effective prevention measures, cervical cancer needlessly ends the lives of over 342,000 women every year. That the vast majority of these deaths – roughly 90% – now occur in low- and middle-income countries speaks to profound inequities in access to cervical cancer prevention in low-resource settings.

TogetHER for Health is a global partnership focused on ending cervical cancer by generating political will, enhancing technology and practice, and expanding awareness to address these inequities. We draw on the strength of our member network of organizations with decades of experience working on the frontlines of sexual and reproductive health and rights in low-resource settings, building support and knowledge among advocates, health workers, government officials, and others who are needed to make cervical cancer elimination a reality.



Photo: Courtesy of ROSE Foundation

Progress in Achieving an End to Cervical Cancer

With the endorsement of all of its Member States, the World Health Organization (WHO) launched its Global Strategy to Accelerate the Elimination of Cervical Cancer in November of 2020 – the first-ever global plan to eliminate a cancer. The Strategy hinges on three critical access targets:

- Vaccinating 90% of girls against HPV by 15 years of age;
- Screening 70% of women at ages 35 and 45 for precancerous cervical lesions; and
- Ensuring that 90% of those women in need receive treatment for cervical disease.

In 2022, we witnessed the continuation of a global trend toward more efficient and effective cervical cancer prevention strategies with the potential to expedite global elimination. In April, the WHO's Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization (SAGE) concluded that a single dose of HPV vaccine provides protection comparable to two- or three-dose regimens. A global transition to single-dose HPV vaccination could greatly expand the number of adolescents to be immunized without expanding vaccine supply while also removing the significant logistical and financial burden of administering follow-up doses.

This announcement came less than a year after the WHO's updated global guidance for screening and treatment of cervical pre-cancer lesions emphasizing HPV DNA testing as the preferred screening method, placing a renewed focus on a technology that can screen more women with greater precision of cancer risk, ideally using samples collected by women themselves. Such an approach can reduce the burden on women to travel long distances to health clinics and allow health practitioners to focus their efforts on the women with the greatest need for follow-up services.

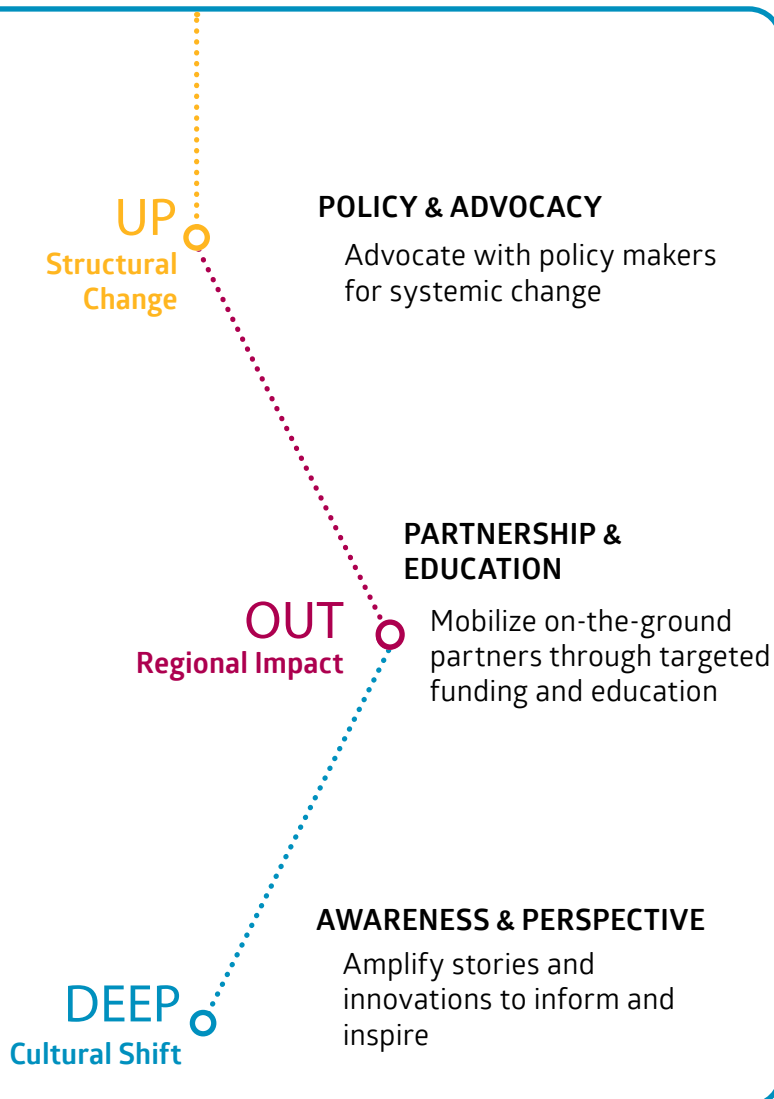
These recent developments have massive implications on the international community's ability to meet WHO's cervical cancer prevention goals, but only if they are translated into effective programs where women need them most. The lives of millions depend on transforming goals into lifesaving impact.

TogetHER's Approach

TogetHER works to catalyze cervical cancer elimination by:

- **Scaling up** to create structural change through policy and advocacy;
- **Scaling out** to drive regional impact through partnership and education; and
- **Scaling deep** to address cultural barriers by increasing awareness and amplifying critical perspectives.

Our work in 2022 lay across these three categories to address the wide spectrum of challenges standing between women and a world without cervical cancer.



TogetHER's Approach

Scaling Up Through Policy and Advocacy

Political will, financial resources, and an enabling policy environment are necessary elements for the full realization of the WHO Cervical Cancer Elimination Strategy. TogetHER and our partners engage policymakers and funders to generate critical support for cervical cancer prevention programs and demand accountability for prior commitments.

The United States government is the single largest funder of cervical cancer screening and treatment in low- and middle-income countries, primarily through the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)'s Go Further collaboration, which also includes partners at the George W. Bush Institute, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Merck, and Roche. Go Further has enabled cervical cancer screening for over 5.7 million women living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa since its launch in 2018, and provided preventive treatment for over 217,000 women. Support for the integration of cervical cancer prevention into family planning programs in Malawi and Mozambique has also been provided through the Partnerships for Enhanced Engagement in Research (PEER) program, jointly funded through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering & Medicine.

Sustaining – and expanding – these crucial investments in a key pillar of the WHO strategy means mobilizing legislative support in the United States Congress. To that end, TogetHER and our member organization Pathfinder International continued engagement of potential congressional champions in 2022, playing a key role in securing supportive language for global cervical cancer programs in the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Program Appropriations Act. (Box 1)

TogetHER's congressional outreach represented one area of engagement with the United States government. We were also encouraged by an interest in the Biden Administration to consider extending the goal of the Cancer Moonshot – a 50% reduction of cancer deaths – beyond its current domestic focus. The clear alignment of the Moonshot's stated purpose and the global effort to eliminate cervical cancer prompted TogetHER and our members to call on the Administration to:

“Cervical cancer.—The Committee understands OGAC and USAID are exploring partnerships to prevent the spread of human papillomavirus and cervical cancer through screening and treatment programs in low-income countries with high prevalence and directs OGAC and USAID to consult with the Committees on Appropriations on plans for and progress of such partnerships.”

Box 1. Cervical cancer language from U.S. State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Bill 2022

1. Facilitate an evidence-based shift to single-dose HPV vaccination in national immunization programs supported by the United States, including Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance;
2. Increase investments in and eligibility for U.S.-funded programs providing cervical cancer screening and treatment of precancer;
3. Incorporate cervical cancer prevention services into standard sexual and reproductive healthcare alongside contraceptive access, testing and treatment for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections; and
4. Implement more impactful, evidence-based cervical cancer prevention strategies.

TogetHER knows that arguments to sustain and increase funding need data to back them up. In November, we

released [our fourth annual estimates of funding](#) for cervical cancer prevention in low-income countries (LICs) and lower middle-income countries (LMICs), covering 2018-2022.

2021 witnessed a substantial increase of financial support for cervical cancer prevention programs in LICs and LMICs. (Figure 1.) An estimated US\$ 94.7 million was invested in HPV vaccination programs, an increase of almost 32% from 2020 driven heavily by increased funding through Gavi, Gavi-eligible countries co-financing their domestic programs, and countries accessing vaccines through the Pan-American Health Organization’s (PAHO) Revolving Fund. Investment in cervical cancer screen-and-treat programs totaled an estimated US\$ 66.6 million in 2021, a massive increase of over 49% built on continued expansion of the Go Further Program and a near-doubling of support through the multilateral partnership Unitaid.

We were thrilled to publish these positive developments, but it remains important to put them in context of what’s needed to truly end cervical cancer. Despite these increases, at the current pace only around \$1.6 billion will be mobilized for cervical cancer prevention in LICs and LMICs, a mere 15% of the \$10.5 billion WHO estimates will be necessary to achieve 2030 targets for cervical cancer elimination in these countries. New champions – political and financial – must step up to make elimination a reality for women around the world.

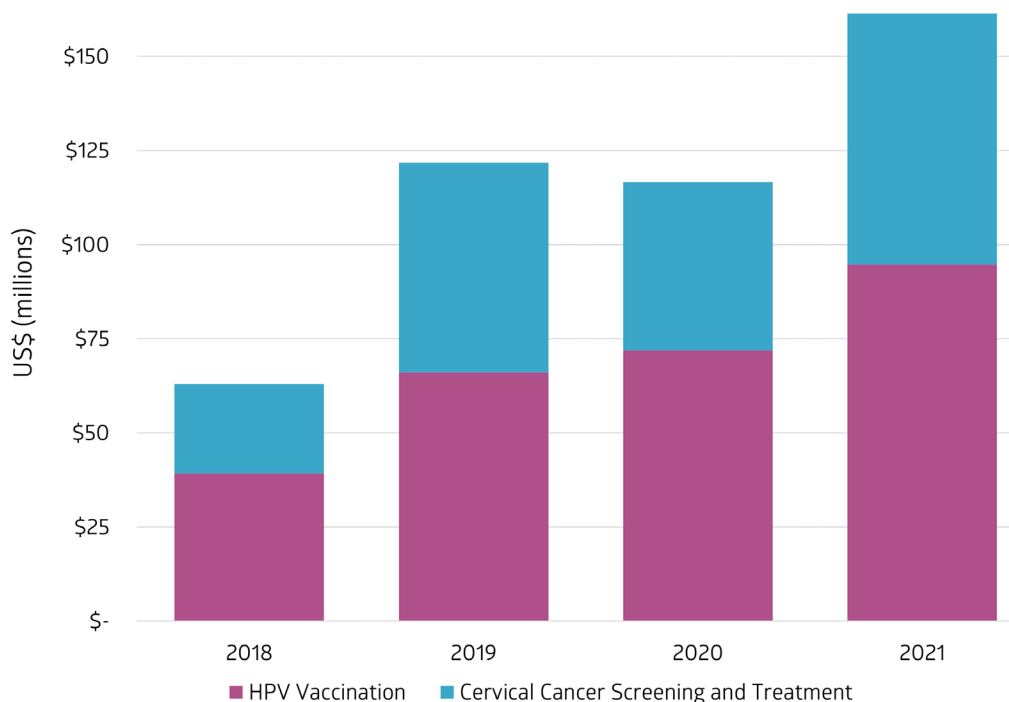


Figure 1. Cervical Cancer Prevention Funding in Low- and Lower Middle-Income Countries, 2018-2021



GREATER CERVICAL HEALTH STARTS WITH REGULAR SCREENING



Kizazi Chetu social media content

There remain several critical areas where advocacy can move the world closer to ending cervical cancer. In 2023, TogetHER will continue our push for country and donor uptake of WHO guidelines emphasizing HPV testing and single-dose HPV vaccine regimens for eligible children, and the integration of cervical cancer prevention activities within family planning and sexual and reproductive health programs.

Scaling Out Through Partnership, Education, and Funding

By leveraging our networks and resources, TogetHER seeks to support programs in low-resource settings through targeted engagement and catalytic funding, generating community health impact and expanding the evidence base to inform programs around the world.

In Kenya, cervical cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer among women between the ages of 15 and 44, ending the lives of 3,200 Kenyan women every year. The country has among the highest rates of cervical cancer globally. TogetHER for Health and our partners at Scope Impact launched the [Kizazi Chetu](#) (“Our Generation” in Kiswahili) campaign in 2021 to ignite a generation free from cervical cancer in Kenya, by building awareness through community partnership and educational messaging that resulted in a threefold increase in screenings at partner clinics.

In 2022, Kizazi Chetu took a new step towards building a sustainable environment for cervical health and putting Kenya on the path to cervical cancer elimination. With

support from Hologic, TogetHER, Scope Impact, and the Lake Region Economic Bloc (LREB) consortium in western Kenya launched a new program to identify both opportunities and challenges supporting the introduction of improved technologies for cervical screening, early detection, and timely treatment in the country. The results of this project will facilitate improvements in providing access to cervical cancer prevention interventions for women across Kenya.

Alabama has among the highest death rates from cervical cancer in the U.S., nearly 50% higher in than in the rest of the country. Promoting education and ensuring access to affordable HPV vaccination, screening, and treatment services for adolescents and women in Alabama are critical for reversing this fatal trend.

TogetHER and our partners at the University of Alabama at Birmingham’s Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology launched Operation Wipe Out to set Alabama on the road to eliminating cervical cancer as a public health problem

**WIPE
OUT**
*cervical
cancer*
ALABAMA

statewide by raising awareness about HPV and cervical cancer prevention and facilitating access to HPV vaccination, screening, follow-up, and treatment if needed. The project kicked off in Chambers County in November 2021, due to the county's alarmingly high rate of cervical cancer disease compared to the rest of the state, with plans to expand to additional counties across Alabama.

2022 saw Operation Wipe Out activities focusing on strengthening connections with communities and garnering perspectives of the wide spectrum of stakeholders necessary to build a statewide cervical cancer elimination effort. Operation Wipe Out launched a dedicated website – www.operationwipeout.org – to provide information on the collaboration and to link visitors to no-cost cervical cancer prevention services in Alabama. At the LaFayette Day event in April, Operation Wipe Out partners provided community members with educational materials on cervical cancer and opportunities to sign up for screening appointments. And in September, Operation Wipe Out gathered over 70 Alabama-based healthcare providers with public health experts to build the outline for a comprehensive and collaborative plan to end cervical cancer in the state.

Operation Wipe Out's broad multisectoral partnership also includes Alabama's Department of Public Health, the Auburn University School of Nursing, the Chambers County School District, the Circle of Care Center for Families, Quality of Life Health Services, Inc., the Rotary Clubs of Birmingham and of LaFayette County, and the O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center.

TogetHER's **Cervical Cancer Grants Program** provides targeted grants designed to generate evidence supporting increased access to innovative cervical cancer prevention technologies. In December of 2021, we announced four grants supporting work primarily taking place in 2022:

- The partnership between BIO Ventures for Global Health (BVGH) and the Rwandan Biomedical Centre (RBC) will train providers to incorporate the SEVIA (smartphone-enhanced VIA) tool into their services, improving on existing cervical cancer screening services within Rwanda and offering a model for improved visual screening that can be applied internationally.
- The Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services



Photo: Courtesy of Grounds for Health

(CBCHS) will implement a mother-daughter cervical cancer prevention approach in two rural communities in Cameroon, with mothers receiving cervical cancer screening services as their daughters simultaneously receive HPV vaccination.

- Grounds for Health will facilitate the introduction of HPV testing through self-sampling within their Kenyan program, seeking to identify best practices in the implementation of HPV testing and treatment programs in rural areas, and promoting local and global dissemination of effective program elements.
- ROSE Foundation will work to address issues around communicating the importance of cervical cancer screening in multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, and multi-cultural Malaysia, strengthen understanding of barriers to cervical cancer prevention as a step toward their removal, and build a sustainable program that normalizes cervical screening, encouraging women to seek out services.

Results from these projects are slated to be released in the first half of 2023, even as a new round of awards is set to be announced in March.

Scaling Deep Through Sharing Knowledge and Perspectives

Cervical cancer impacts lives in every region of the world, which means that effective prevention programs must reflect the local context and build on a widely available base of knowledge on what works in other settings.

TogetHER provides opportunities for practitioners and advocates to share their expertise and inspiration with their global peers, constructing a truly global network of practice standing in solidarity against cervical cancer.

In 2022, TogetHER added two new webinars to our ongoing series focused on key topics in cervical cancer prevention:

- A January discussion co-hosted with Pepal and featuring colleagues from the Tanzanian Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, ICAP, and Baylor Uganda, discussing a leadership development model building the skills and capacity of public health experts and positively impacting cervical cancer prevention efforts in Tanzania, Uganda and India.
- A July conversation with members from the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI), SUCCESS, and Unitaid teams presenting their experience rolling out thermal ablation devices to increase access to treatment for cervical precancer as well as renewed access pricing agreements allowing a broad range of countries and partners to procure these devices at pre-negotiated prices.

2022 also saw an increase in the number of in-person fora relevant to cervical cancer stakeholders, opportunities that had been put on hold by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Executive Director Heather White was in attendance for multiple events taking place around September's United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), featuring global advocates making the case for investing to end cervical cancer. The UNGA saw high-level advocacy for updating HPV vaccination guidelines to incorporate single-dose regimens, as well as the welcome announcement of \$14.25 billion in replenishment

funding for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria, which now provides support for 20 countries integrating cervical cancer prevention into HIV/AIDS activities.

TogetHER also participated in October's World Cancer Congress in Geneva, connecting with partners from around the globe – many of for the first time since the start of the pandemic. One highlight was meeting Florence Manjuh from Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services, one of our Cervical Cancer Grants Program awardees.

Over the course of 2022, TogetHER was offered opportunities to share our own insight and perspectives in a number of venues, including:

- An [in-depth interview](#) with Heather White marking Cervical Cancer Awareness Month on the sexual health website Giddy in January;
- A [January profile](#) of our co-Founder and Chief Strategy Officer Kathy Vizas in the Maverick Collective's online ISSUE publication;
- A discussion on the Johns Hopkins University-based [Knowledge SUCCESS website](#) in June featuring TogetHER's Heather White and Eva Lathrop from TogetHER member organization Population Services International highlighting challenges to providing access to cervical cancer prevention in the context of a life-course approach to sexual and reproductive health; and
- An [op-ed from Dr. White in Devex](#) in November celebrating leadership driving uptake of cervical cancer prevention in Zambia.

Race to None: Until Cervical Cancer is No More

In May, TogetHER celebrated our five-year anniversary with our first-ever fundraiser, titled Race to None. This virtual event provided a fantastic introduction to what inspired the creation of TogetHER for Health, showcased a number of our partners, and featured our first-ever Trailblazer of the Year Award, given to Dr. Isabel Scarinci, Ph.D., M.P.H, Vice-Chair for Global and Rural Health at the University of Alabama at Birmingham's Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology.



TogetHER Executive Director Heather White and Florence Manjuh of Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services at the World Cancer Congress, Geneva Switzerland, October 2022



Special acknowledgment to our tier-level Race to None supporters: Kathryn Vizas, Star Beer USA, Antiva Biosciences, Durable Medical Equipment Services, Charles Knowles, Judy Najera, and Population Services International.

Bringing Organizations Driving Cervical Cancer Prevention Efforts Together

Together exists to serve the wider effort of global cervical cancer elimination, creating spaces for dialogue and collaboration and acting as a networking hub connecting organizations from around the world.

In 2022, Together continued to convene and support our network of member organizations: the American Cancer Society, Basic Health International (BHI), Global Communities, Global Health Labs, Jhpiego, Pathfinder, and Population Services International (PSI).

We were also thrilled to be approached by a number of organizations serving women around the globe seeking to build the visibility of their work and learn more about



our own activities. It's an honor to be part of this global movement to end this preventable disease. As we say, Together isn't just the name of our organization: it's how we work to make elimination a reality.

In addition to the members of Together, we would like to thank our collaborating partners and supporters, including Panorama Global, Hologic, Roche, the Women to Watch Foundation, Maverick Collective, Cervical Cancer Action for Elimination, Colective, Scope Impact, the Tiba Foundation, the Matibabu Foundation, Conquering Cancer, and all of the organizations who share Together's commitment to the global elimination of cervical cancer.

Together We Can End Cervical Cancer

2022 represented a major step toward a world without cervical cancer. The path ahead will not be easy, but 2022 provided a wealth of developments underscoring that with collective effort and dedication, ending cervical cancer forever is absolutely achievable.

We continue to be inspired by the collaboration and guidance fueling our mission. Thank you for your support as we work for a world where cervical cancer no longer threatens any woman, anywhere.



Together Members



MOBILIZING THE WORLD TO END CERVICAL CANCER

SERVICES OFFERED

- OUT PATIENT SERVICES.
- MATERNITY DELIVERY SERVICES.
- LABORATORY.
- M.C.H FAMILY PLANNING.
- PHYSIOTHERAPY.
- CERVICAL & BREAST CANCER SCREENING.
- C.C.C.
- MEDICAL CERTIFICATE
- DRESSING AND STITCHING.

HUDUMA BORI NI HAKI YAKO!!

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