

# THE CARIBBEAN CIVIL SOCIETY CERVICAL CANCER PREVENTION INITIATIVE

EMPOWERING VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES TO FIGHT CERVICAL CANCER

Cervical cancer is the **leading cause of death** among women in most developing countries, including Latin America and the Caribbean.

Cervical cancer is the **second leading cause of cancer-related death** among Caribbean women.

Although up to **95 percent of deaths are preventable**, cervical cancer is still a major killer among Caribbean women.



Cervical cancer death rates in the Caribbean are several magnitudes higher than in other countries, such as the United States.

There are **37,700** deaths per year from cervical cancer in the Americas; with women of the Caribbean and Latin America composing **80 percent** of this figure.



Each year, approximately **2,245** Caribbean women die from cervical cancer - **that's 6 deaths a day**.

## KEY OUTPUTS OF THE CERVICAL CANCER PREVENTION INITIATIVE (C4PI)

### 4322 women

Under the C4PI, a total of **4322 women** were screened for cervical cancer.



**67 percent** of women were screened for cervical cancer with **Pap smear**



**33 percent** of women were screened for cervical cancer with **VIA**



**Over 72 percent** of women had never been screened in their lifetime.



**HAITI**  
Groupe de Support Contre le Cancer



**GUYANA**  
Cancer Institute of Guyana



**BELIZE**  
Belize Cancer Society



### SENSITISATION, SCREENING AND REFERRAL

Cervical cancer screening was conducted in conjunction with educational outreach. Women who received abnormal Pap smear or positive VIA screening results were either given on-site treatment or referred to a health professional for additional evaluation and treatment.

#### 24,187

WOMEN SENSITISED

#### 2776

WOMEN SCREENED

VIA

Final estimates of **3,476 women screened**, and **26,687 women sensitised** are predicted on completion of the second phase of C4PI in July, 2017.

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN WHO ACCESSED VIA SCREENING FOR THE FIRST TIME

#### >80%

\*An estimate.

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN WHOSE VIA SCREENING RESULTS REPORTED POSITIVE

#### 17%

#### 1010

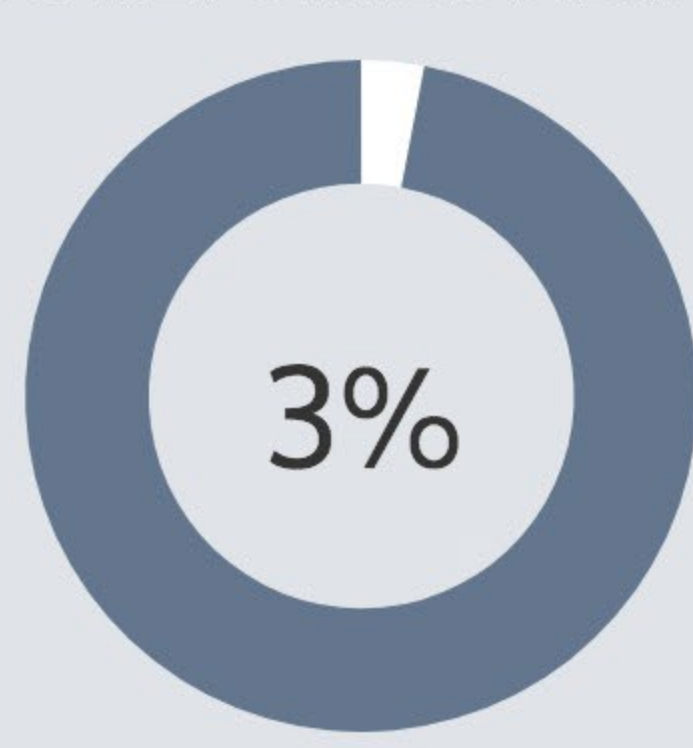
WOMEN SCREENED AND SENSITISED

PAP

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN WHO ACCESSED PAP SMEAR SCREENING FOR THE FIRST TIME

#### 85%

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN WHOSE PAP SMEAR SCREENING RESULTS REPORTED ABNORMAL



Low Grade Squamous Intra-epithelial Lesion: **13 women**

High Grade Squamous Intra-epithelial Lesion: **9 women**

Atypical Squamous Cell of Undetermined Significance: **11 women**

#### 1690

WOMEN SENSITISED

#### 536

WOMEN SCREENED

PAP

VIA

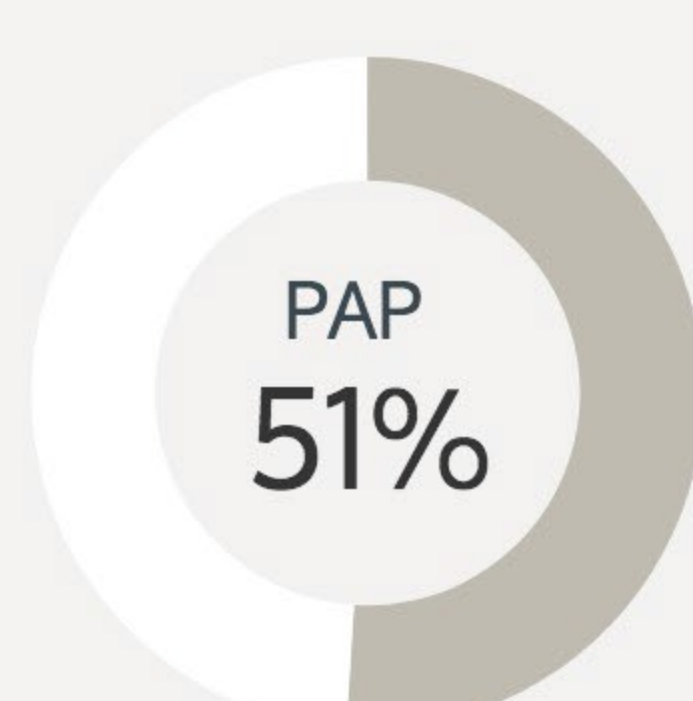
PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN WHO ACCESSED PAP SMEAR SCREENING FOR THE FIRST TIME

#### 52%

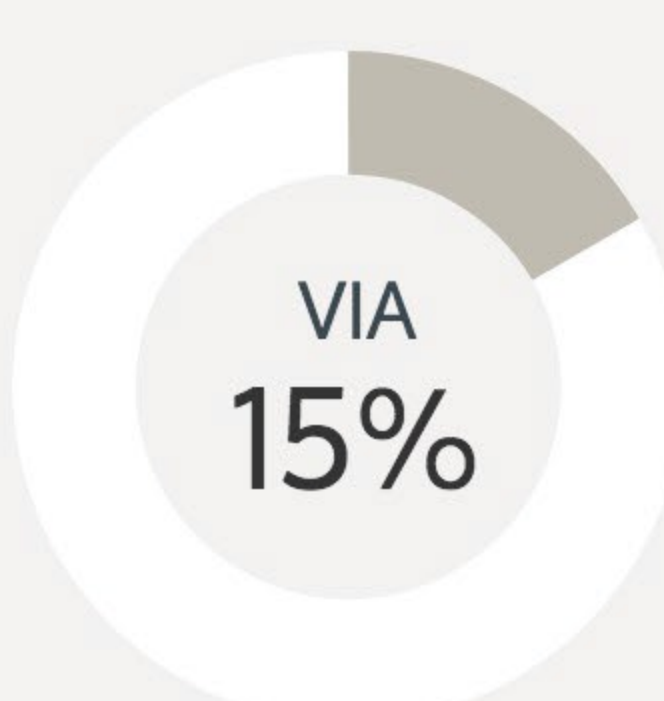
PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN WHO ACCESSED VIA SCREENING FOR THE FIRST TIME

#### 58%

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN WHOSE SCREENING RESULTS REPORTED ABNORMAL (PAP SMEAR) AND POSITIVE (VIA)



PAP  
51%



VIA  
15%



### OTHER OUTPUTS



**45 nurses and 8 doctors** trained



Service delivery capacity of Groupe de Support Contre le Cancer strengthened



Improved knowledge and attitude regarding cervical cancer prevention among Guyanese women in rural communities



Healthcare professionals trained (an additional benefit as this was not a projected output)



Service delivery capacity of Cancer Institute of Guyana strengthened



**325 healthcare professionals** trained



In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, developed the National HPV Vaccination Plan



Service delivery capacity of Belize Cancer Society strengthened

## ABOUT C4PI

The goal of the **Caribbean Civil Society Cervical Cancer Prevention Initiative (C4PI): Empowering Vulnerable Communities to Fight Cervical Cancer** is to strengthen Caribbean civil society organisation (CSO) efforts to reduce the national burden of cervical cancer. The project aims to ensure the effective delivery of cervical cancer programmes to underserved communities in **Belize, Haiti and Guyana**. The subgrant recipients are: the **Belize Cancer Society**; the **Groupe de Support Contre le Cancer**; and the **Cancer Institute of Guyana**.

The target audience of the project was vulnerable women of economically disadvantaged and indigenous populations, who would not normally have access to cervical cancer screening services, or be educated about the role of screening in the prevention of cervical cancer.

The **key objectives** of the project are indicated below.

- 1 Strengthening CSOs' capacities to deliver services
- 2 Building capacities of healthcare providers in the prevention and control of cervical cancer
- 3 Educating women about cervical cancer, and empowering women to seek early detection services
- 4 Improving cervical cancer screening and treatment coverage among underserved communities

## EARLY DETECTION TESTS

Before cancer develops, cervical cells undergo changes; these abnormal cells can be detected with tests, allowing for effective treatment at this early, pre-cancerous stage, preventing the progression to cervical cancer.



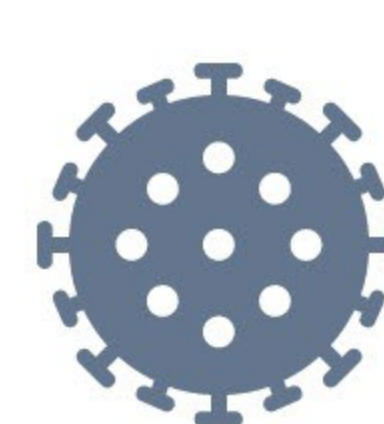
### PAP SMEAR

The **Papanicolau-stained (Pap) smear** is the most routinely used screening test, and an effective means for the early detection of cervical cancer. The Pap smear detects abnormal microscopic changes in cervical cells, and can identify pre-cancerous lesions. Pap smear results are reported as normal or abnormal.



### VIA TEST

**Visual Inspection of the Cervix by Acetic Acid (VIA)** is a naked eye examination of the visible cervix following the application of acetic acid (diluted vinegar). Abnormal tissue of the cervix stains white (acetowhite) - a positive VIA test, indicating a pre-cancerous lesion. As a reliable and cost-effective alternative to the Pap smear, the VIA test is increasingly used in low-resource settings.



### HPV TEST

The most common risk factor for cervical cancer is infection with **human papilloma virus (HPV)**, transmitted from person-to-person, specifically through sexual contact. The test detects DNA of high-risk or cancer-causing HPV strains in the cervix. HPV 16 and HPV 18 cause 7 out of 10 cervical cancers.

### SOURCES

ICO Information Centre on Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) and Cancer. <http://www.hpvcentre.net/>  
Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). Cervical Cancer in the Americas. [http://www2.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=doc\\_view&Itemid=270&gid=17498&lang=en](http://www2.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_view&Itemid=270&gid=17498&lang=en)



HEALTHY CARIBBEAN COALITION

