



EVENT REPORT

Cervical Cancer - Strengthening the Surgical Workforce

23 November 2022

General overview

Following the second anniversary of WHO's Cervical Cancer Elimination Initiative, the Global Surgery Foundation (GSF) and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) joined forces to host a roundtable discussion on how to improve access to cervical cancer treatment and strengthen the surgical workforce, especially in low-income and resource-limited settings. Although remarkable progress has been achieved through prevention efforts via vaccinations and screening, not enough has been done to address the treatment targets. Sustainable solutions for treatment require overall surgical systems strengthening, as well as coordinated catalytic and sustained financing to scale surgical capacity.

Event objectives

- Raise awareness on Cervical Cancer treatment, particularly in resource-limited settings.
- Offer a venue for knowledge sharing and discussion on Cervical Cancer and surgical systems strengthening.
- Promote a learning atmosphere and establish a strong network which can be utilized after the event.
- Identify and understand how to coordinate catalytic and sustained financing to scale solutions.

Agenda and speakers

15:05 | Speakers



Dr. Sara Nasser
Gynecologic Oncology, Charité Comprehensive Cancer Center, Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Germany. Vice-President of the Pan-Arabian Research Society for Gynecological Oncology



Prof. Rahel Ghebre
Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Women's Health (OBGYN), University of Minnesota. International Gynecologic Cancer Society



Dr. Tadios Mekonnen Asres
Director of the Gynecology Oncology Fellowship, Rwanda



Prof. Michael Hicks
Obstetrics and Gynecology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Director of Gynecologic Oncology, Michigan Cancer Institute. International Mentor Gynecologic Oncology Fellowship, University Teaching Hospital, Lusaka, Zambia



Prof. Groesbeck Parham
Gynecologic Oncology, UNC. Senior Clinical Expert, WHO Cervical Cancer Elimination Initiative



Ms. Joanne Manrique
President of the Centre for Global Health and Development

15:00 | Keynote address



Dr. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka
Member of The GSF Foundation Board. Former UN Under-Secretary-General (USG) and Executive Director (ED) of UN Women & Former Deputy-President of South Africa

Moderated by



Dr. Isioma Okolo
Advisor to The GSF
Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, Scotland, UK
Program in Global Surgery & Social Change, Harvard Medical School, Boston, USA

15:35 | Roundtable discussion

All

15:55 | Closing

Key messages

The discussion focused on sustainable solutions for the treatment of cervical cancer, how to strengthen surgical capacity and how to best coordinate for catalytic and sustained financing to scale surgical capacity.

The main challenge is *'The lack of robust surgical ecosystems, things as basic as oxygen, blood, anaesthesia, anesthetic medication, availability to operating rooms, laboratory and image services, surgical instruments, and pathology. But also, the lack of sustainable ecosystems'* - Prof Groesbeck Parham

Building surgical capacity

- Tumour boards have proven to be a great tool for building a sustainable digital pan-Arabian and African network for continuous exchange and capacity building for the care of women with gynaecological cancers.
- The IGCS recently launched a two-year comprehensive global fellowship program in Rwanda, designed to support formal training.
- Task shifting and sharing are possible and can be part of the solution. However, task shifting requires very close monitoring and guidelines to ensure quality and safety as programs scale up. In Zambia, nurses were trained to perform procedures such as LEEP and LLETZ on women with pre-cancerous lesions with good outcomes.
- The blended financing model can be used to provide catalytic funding, this can be mix of the traditional philanthropic and grant funds with concessional and industry capital.
- A blended finance model helps alleviate concerns faced by investors and funders, mitigates financial risks, increases access to new capital sources and improves the delivery of products, services and infrastructure.

The Global Surgery Fund

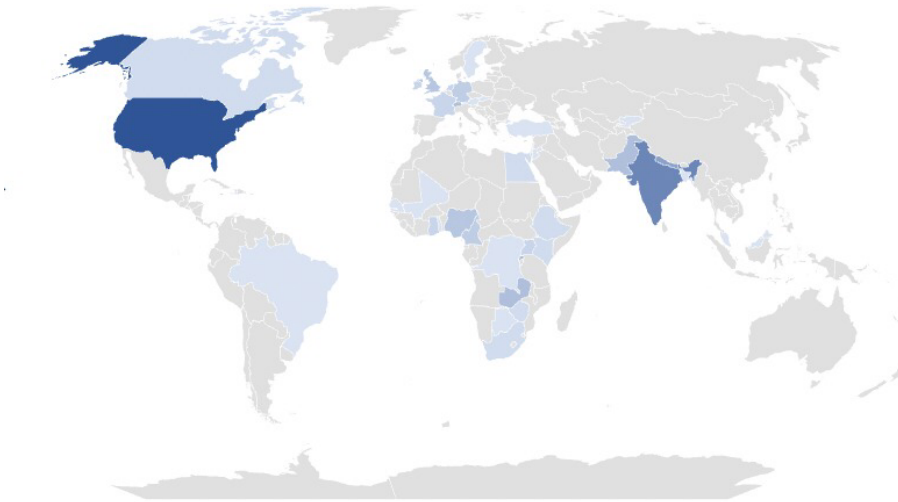
'It's not lack of money, but how we are using our resources and how we effectively triangulate them into different implementation projects' – Ms Joanne Manrique

- The current level of investment is not adequate to reach the 90-70-90 targets, although Investments have increased.
- It's the perfect time to initiate a global surgery fund due to the increased prioritisation of surgical care at the political level and recognition of surgery as a pathway to achieving universal healthcare.
- GSF is presently working on creating a pooled catalytic fund to scale up surgical care. This can have tremendous potential and impact on communities in LMICs.

Event attendance

- A total of 133 participants attended the event via Zoom.
- A total of 40 countries were represented, with highest representation from United States (15%), India (10%), Nepal (7%), Rwanda (5%), Zambia (4%).
- Most participants who attended were Medical Staff (29%) followed by Academia (26%), NGO (19%), and UN/Government (14%).

Geographic distribution



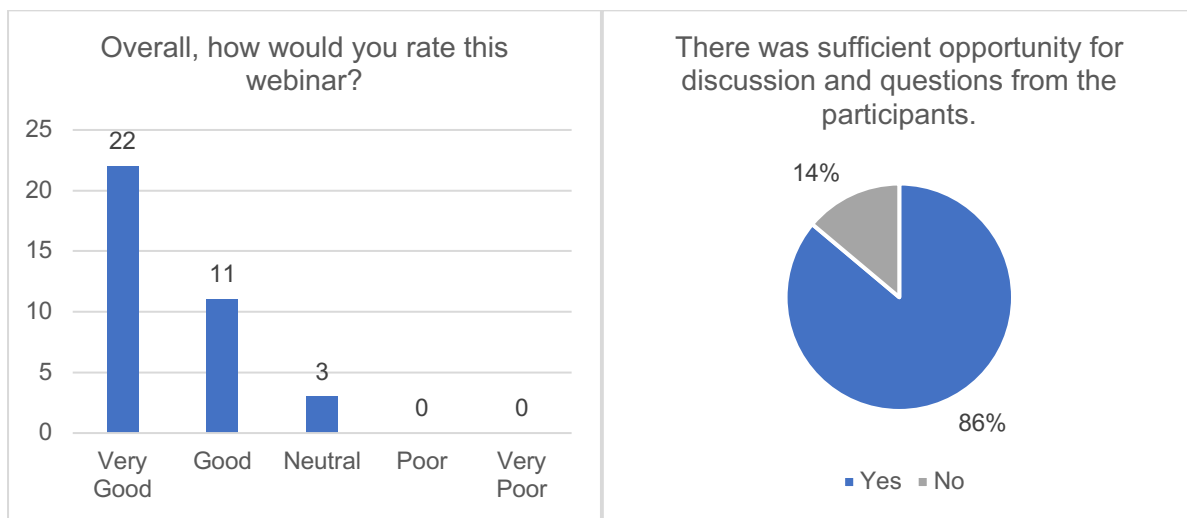
Promotion and planning

- Promotional activities were channeled through social media via UNITAR and GSF platforms, as well as mass mailing campaigns.



Evaluation

A total of 36 participants responded to the evaluation survey sent to the participants following the event. Participants were re-directed to the survey following the event and a reminder to complete the survey was also sent out two days following the event. 92% of respondents rated the webinar as 'very good' or 'good' overall and 86% of respondents strongly agreed that there was sufficient opportunity for discussion and questions from the participants.



Event outcome and next steps

1. The **event recording** is available here: <https://www.globalsurgeryfoundation.org/events/2022/cervical-cancer-strengthening-the-surgical-workforce>
2. The Global Surgery Foundation is committed to developing a **pooled catalytic fund** to scale up surgical care.
3. Cancer care is a key entry point for the GSF, and the GSF is committed to continuing to support, develop, and collaborate on programmatic efforts for **Women's Cancer**, including Cervical Cancer and Breast Cancer.



THE GLOBAL SURGERY FOUNDATION



The Global Surgery Foundation

Surgery for all who need it, wherever they are

CONTACT

info@globalsurgeryfoundation.org

www.globalsurgeryfoundation.org