

Developing a National Cervical Cancer Elimination Strategy in Vanuatu:

An example of Country-Led Implementation and Regional Collaboration

Presenter: Dr Carol Naidu (University of Sydney)

Co-Authors:



Dr Boniface Damutalau, Consultant
Obstetrician (Port Vila Hospital)



Dr Mackenzie Sitobata, Senior Project Coordinator
(Vanuatu Family Health Association)

Acknowledgement & Disclosure

The Vanuatu Ministry of Health convened the National Cervical Cancer Elimination Project Working Group to develop this strategy in line with the WHO Global strategy to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem and the Strategic framework for the comprehensive prevention and control of cervical cancer in the Western Pacific Region 2023- 2030. Technical support for Strategy development was provided by the Cancer Elimination Collaboration at the University of Sydney and partner organisations, including the Kirby Institute, UNSW Sydney. Funding support for Strategy development was provided by the WHO Vanuatu Office, with additional support from the Elimination Partnership in the Indo-Pacific for Cervical Cancer (EPICC) Program, funded by the Australian Government and Minderoo Foundation and the Advancing Cervical Cancer Elimination in the Pacific (AdvanCE) program, funded by the Swire Group.



Ministry of Health
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Republic of Vanuatu



World Health
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Presentation Overview

1. Context leading to the realization of the strategy
2. Overarching strategy objectives
3. Development Process
4. Working Group Workshop
5. Stakeholder Consultation
6. Guiding Principals of the document
7. Strategy Launch
8. Sustainability Planning Workshop
9. Next steps



VANUATU **National Cervical Cancer** **Elimination Strategy 2026 – 2035**





Background

- A pacific island nation with an estimated population of 326, 740 across 83 islands
- Remarkable progress in cervical cancer screening rates
- On track to achieve the 70% screening goal
- One of the first pacific island nation to commit, endorse and launch a cervical cancer elimination specific national strategy
- **February–September 2025:** extensive consultative and technical process to develop the strategy and outline next steps

Strategy Objectives

- Designed to define clear goals and actions across each elimination pillar
- Focus on identifying practical steps required to progress towards elimination
- Apply a health system strengthening lens to each pillar of elimination
- Identify stakeholders who can drive the objectives forward
- Highlight the priority populations
- Commitment towards building a sustainable program
- Establish governance structures





Development Process & Timeline

2025

February: Start of consultancy and desk review/environmental scan

May: Working Group Workshop

August: Stakeholder Consultation

October: Final Strategy ready for endorsement

2026

March: Completion of Revisions, Endorsed.

April – June: Formatting

August: Official Launch

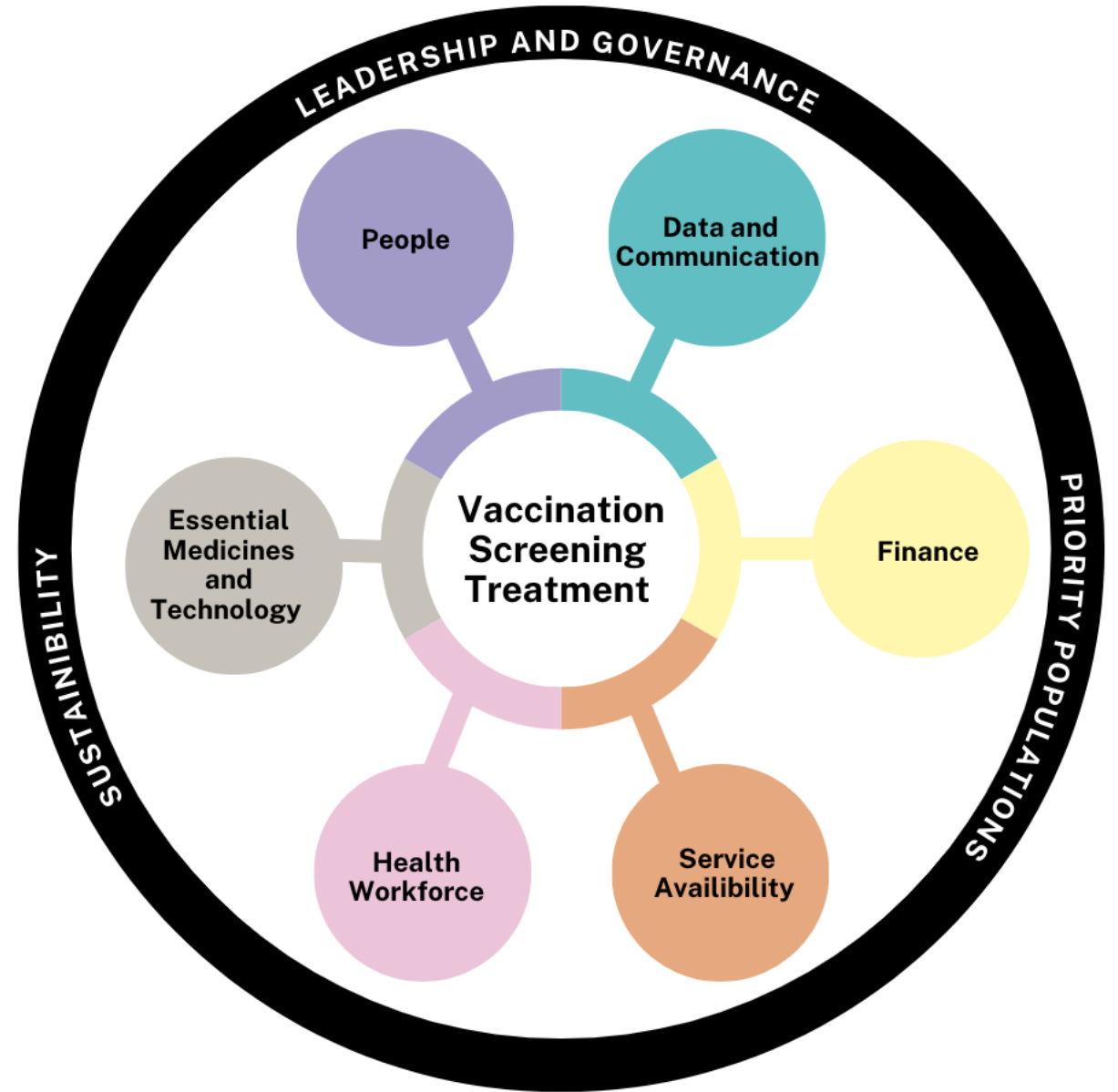
Working Group Workshop

- Took place in May 2026
- Key members of the technical working group met to determine high level structure and priority areas
- Conducted a SWOT analysis
- Agreement around aims, vision and mission of the strategy



Guiding Principals

- We employed the WHO building health-system building blocks as a framework
- Cervical Cancer Policy development tool (Hyatt et al, 2026 [unpublished])
- Every pillar was broken down according to the building blocks
- Cross-cutting area underpinning all pillars





Stakeholder Consultation

- Took place in August 2026
- Broader stakeholders working across the elimination pillars met to verify the strategy
- Feedback and consultative process
- Agreement around governance
- Identification of priority populations
- Discussions around ongoing sustainability and financing pathways of the elimination program



Strategy Launch

- Launched by the Health Minister in August this year
- Expression of strong commitment towards the program



Sustainability Planning Workshop

- Acknowledge and celebrate the launch of the national elimination strategy
- Discuss the next steps – with an integration, further scaling & sustainability planning lens
- Come to a common high-level understanding of next steps towards developing a national costed, phased, implementation plan grounded in the current situation and building on achievements to date, with a focus on sustainability.





Next Steps:

Financing and Sustainability Planning

- Cancer Elimination Collaboration, through the EPICC program, providing technical assistance to the MoH to:
 - Conduct a detailed costing exercise
 - Provide Modelling data (eg. Lives saved, reduction of incidence and mortality)
 - Develop Return on Investment to strengthen case (eg. Every dollar spent = X dollars returned)
 - Support strategic planning and prepare for national budget submissions



Thank you for your attention!

The strategy is available to download
from the International Cancer Control
Partnership (ICCP) Portal



Scan to access strategy