



FAITH LEADERS' DECLARATION ON CERVICAL CANCER PREVENTION AND MATERNAL HEALTH

"A Moral Imperative for Healing and Justice"

Issued May 1, 2025, at the Faith in Action Health Conference

Roussel House, Donum Dei, Karen, Nairobi, Kenya

Preamble

We, the faith leaders, health experts, and representatives of diverse religious traditions gathered at the *Faith in Action Health Conference*, recognize the sacred duty to protect life and dignity. Guided by our shared spiritual values and the urgent public health crisis of **cervical cancer** and **maternal mortality** in Africa, we declare our unwavering commitment to action.

Alarmed by the preventable deaths of thousands of women and girls—

- **5,250 new cervical cancer cases** and **3,286 deaths annually** in Kenya (GLOBOCAN 2022),
- **342 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births**,
- **HPV vaccine uptake below 30%** despite its life-saving potential—
we affirm that faith communities must lead the charge for change.

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Our Shared Convictions

1. **Sacredness of Life:** Every woman and child is created in the divine image (*Imago Dei*). Their suffering from preventable causes is a moral failure demanding our collective response.
2. **Faith in Action:** From the healing ministry of Jesus to Hājar's perseverance in Islamic tradition, our scriptures compel us to *run, act, and save lives*.
3. **Justice and Equity:** Systemic gaps in healthcare access—driven by poverty, stigma, or neglect—violate the dignity of the vulnerable. Faith communities must bridge these gaps.

Commitments

1. Awareness and Education

- Integrate cervical cancer and maternal health messaging into **worship services, faith-based schools, and interfaith dialogues**.
- Train **faith leaders** and **survivor advocates** to dispel myths, reduce stigma, and promote HPV vaccination.
- Leverage **faith media** (radio, TV) and digital platforms to reach millions.

2. Community Mobilization

- Host **medical camps**, youth/women festivals, and "Daycare for Awareness" events in places of worship.
- Collaborate with **traditional leaders** and influencers to align health campaigns with cultural values.

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- Celebrate **Cervical Cancer Awareness Month** and other international health days through faith-led initiatives.

3. Health System Integration

- Advocate for policies that embed **cervical cancer prevention** and **maternal health services** into routine faith-based programs.
- Partner with governments to strengthen **vaccine supply chains** and train healthcare workers.
- Establish **faith liaison committees** to ensure community feedback shapes health interventions.

4. Theological and Pastoral Leadership

- Preach, teach, and model **compassionate action** from pulpits, madrassas, and temples.
- Address **gender norms** that hinder healthcare access, engaging men as allies.
- Amplify **survivor voices** to humanize the crisis and inspire hope.

5. Accountability and Collaboration

- Form an **Interfaith Task Force** to monitor progress and share best practices.
- Mobilize resources from religious institutions for **prevention, treatment, and advocacy**.
- Demand transparent data systems to track disparities and successes.

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Call to Action

We urge:

- **Governments** to prioritize funding and policy alignment with faith-based health networks.
 - **International Partners** (WHO, NGOs) to invest in faith-led solutions and co-create programs.
 - **Communities** to reject stigma and embrace life-saving interventions.
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Closing Affirmation

"In the name of our shared humanity and divine calling, we pledge to transform grief into action, silence into advocacy, and despair into hope. Together, we will eliminate cervical cancer and end preventable maternal deaths—because no daughter of God should perish from neglect."

Endorsed by:

- **The Catholic Church in Kenya** (Nairobi and Mombasa Archdioceses, and the Health Departments of the Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, Nyeri, Nakuru, Malindi, Meru, Murang'a, Kitui, and Homabay (Arch)dioceses.
- **Supreme Council of Kenyan Muslims (SUPKEM)**
- **Africa Council of Religious Leaders – Religions for Peace (ACRL-RfP)**
- **Hindu Council of Kenya (HCK)**
- **All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC)**
- **Association of Evangelicals in Africa (AEA)**

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- **Organization of African Instituted Churches (OAIC)**
- **Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) Church East-Central Africa Division**
- **Organization of Africa Independent Churches (OAIC),**
- **IRCK (Inter-Religious Council of Kenya)**
- **Africa Health and Economic Transformation Initiative (AHETI)**
- **KILELE Health Association**
- **St. Francis Community Hospital**
- **Faith to Action Network**
- **Global Listening Project**
- **Fraym**
- **Kenya Community Support Centre (KECOSCE)**

Signed this 1st day of May 2025

Nairobi, Kenya

"Faith is not passive. Faith runs. Faith acts. Faith saves life.

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