

Médecins du Monde

Doctors of the World



Cervical Cancer Prevention and Control Landscape in Displaced Populations

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Organization's Role and Activities

- Médecins du Monde (Doctors of the World) is an international humanitarian medical organisation established in 1980. We aim to provide care, bear witness and support social change for the universal right to health. MdM is a **network of 17 independent chapters operating in 75 countries**.
- In France, MdM is implementing **48 projects in 25 locations**, with a strong focus on the most vulnerable persons: **sex workers, drug users, people living in precarious conditions and migrants**. Of the 17 000 persons we welcome each year in our health centres, 98% of them are foreigners.
- We are currently implementing early detection and treatment of precancerous cervical lesions in five countries: **Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Myanmar, Madagascar** and more recently the DRC, with support from the French Development Agency. In France, we run a project for vaginal self-sampling. We conducted several studies, both in France and abroad, to assess the efficiency, durability and possibilities for upscaling through adapted mathematical modelling.
- We succeeded in integrating **community-based self-sampling and HPV testing** into national health guidelines in three countries.
- We now aim to develop specific testing and treatment strategies for **migrants on the move** including **One-Stop Centres** approaches.

Overview of Displaced Populations

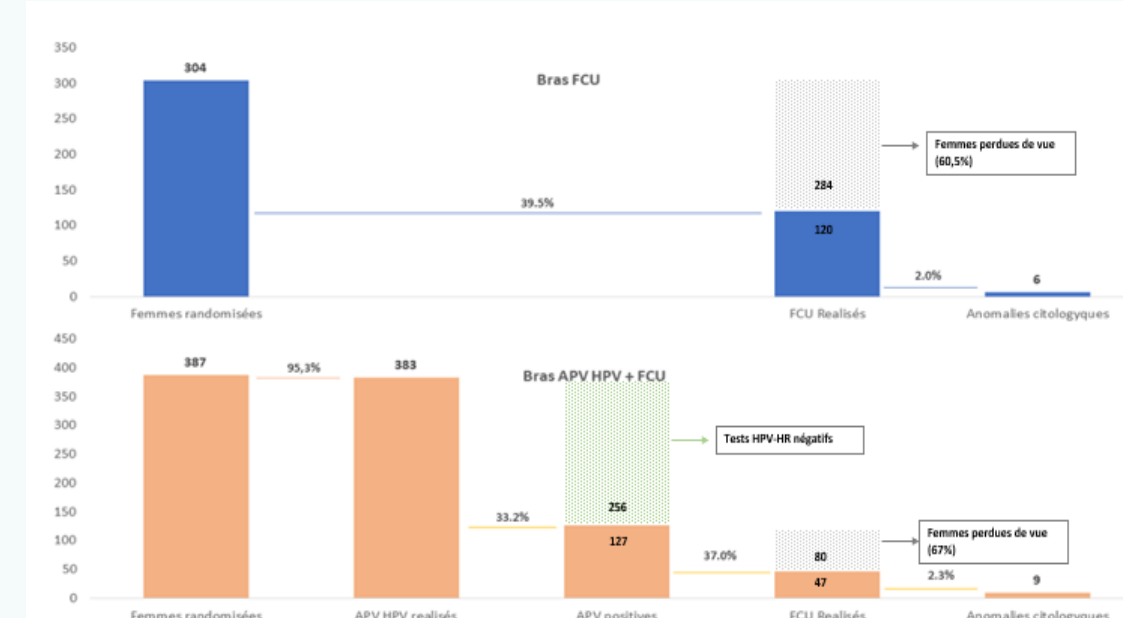
- Undocumented migrants in France can benefit, under specific conditions, from the State Medical Aid (AME), but research shows that **more than 50% of eligible migrants still don't benefit from it**, due to various administrative barriers and restrictions.
- Unfortunately, specific data about incidence of HPV and cervical cancer among migrant populations in France is still missing.

Cervical Cancer Prevention and Control

- National strategies for generalised screening and treatment of cervical cancer and HPV vaccination, but without specific strategies for most vulnerable populations, such as sex workers and vulnerable migrant women.
- Our research in France among vulnerable populations, including undocumented migrant women, aged 25 to 65, 82% of them had never undergone a cervical smear test, and only 15% were aware of the causes and screening methods for cervical cancer. This shows there are still important barriers to access to health services, information and prevention.
- Same research shows that women who had a vaginal self-sampling had a 71% completion rate, compared to 40% for the ones with a pap-smear, and with a reduced completion time. When offered self-testing option, 99% accepted it compared to only 30% when required to visit a centre for a pap-smear. Still, only 30% follow through further screening & treatment after a positive result, due to high number of required visits.



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A comparison of screening methods in underprivileged women in France (pap-smear vs. vaginal self-sampling and pap-smear)

Our research reports

- Relevance of the cervical cancer screening algorithm in Ouagadougou (2024)
- Implementation of HPV-based cervical cancer screening in Burkina Faso (2021)
- Access to cervical cancer screening in underprivileged women (2019)



Barriers to Access and Implementation Among These Populations

- Although our projects are not – currently – specifically tailored to displaced populations, our research in France among women living in precarious conditions shows that there's a need for adapted methods and strategies, such as vaginal self-sampling, accessible point-of-care testing at community level, outreach strategies, access to interpretation and health mediation, and a reduction of administrative barriers

The Way Forward

- There's a crucial need for community engagement through per educators and health mediators, integrated "screen & treat" models including thermo-ablation and point-of-care test PCR at primary care level, complementarity between strategies, and adequate funding. High-quality counselling and subsequent better understanding of HPV results increases completion and treatment.