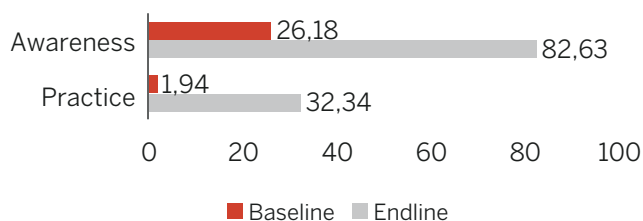


CANCER SCREENING IN LOW RESOURCE SETTINGS: HOW TO INCREASE AWARENESS AND UPTAKE OF SERVICES?



Awareness towards cervical cancer resulted in an increased utilization of cervical cancer screening service

From April 2015 to May 2018 Doctors with Africa CUAMM has been implementing a project on cervical cancer screening and treatment in South West Shoa Zone, Oromia region, Ethiopia. As part of the project, a cross sectional baseline and final KAP survey was conducted, with the aim of measuring the impact of awareness creation activities on the level of knowledge, attitude and practice towards cervical cancer screening. A randomly selected 722 women at baseline and 708 women at final project period were interviewed. The data was collected through tablet utilizing Survey CTO data collection software platform, and values at baseline and end line were compared using the test statistics of difference between two proportions.

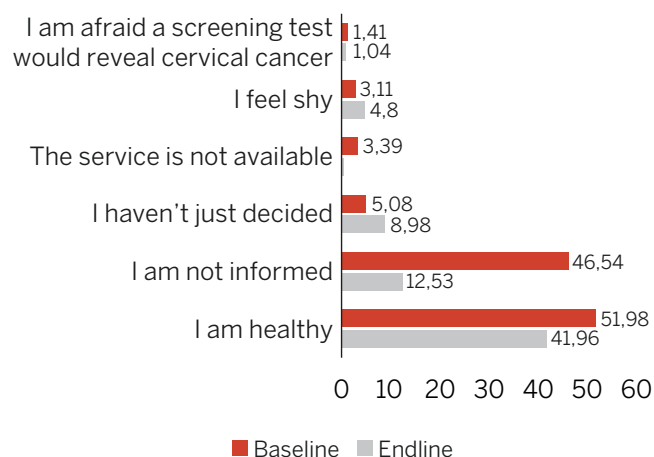


Graph 1. Awareness and practice of women towards cervical cancer screening (for practice: women who confirmed having undergone screening)

The actions implemented proved successful in increasing awareness of the population, which resulted in an even greater increase of the uptake of screening services, which raised from around 2% of the women interviewed at baseline to more than 32% at the end of the project.

Utilizing the existing community structures including **health extension workers**, who have been trained in counselling, and combining it with **mass community mobilization activities** seemed to be effective in reaching more women with cervical cancer related information.

The feeling of being healthy remains the main factor hindering women from accessing cervical cancer screening services, which indicates a still poor understanding of the importance of prevention.



Graph 2. Top 6 main reasons for not getting screened

Knowledge of women, measured as the understanding of signs and symptoms of the disease, the risk factors, and means of prevention, was assessed at both periods. However, the study did not find a statistically significant difference comparing baseline and end line values. Having awareness about cervical cancer more than the knowledge of the women was found to be the major factor in boosting access to cervical cancer screening services.

