

# Tabora receives 20.8m/- cervical cancer equipment

From ALLAN NTANA  
in Nzega

ELIZABETH Graser Pediatric AIDS Foundation (EGPAF) has handed over Cervical Cancer Prevention and screening (CECAP) equipment worth 20,767,400/- to Tabora Region.

The equipment was handed over to Ndala Mission Hospital Doctor in-Charge, Dr Joseph Lugumila, in Nzega District Tabora Region and it includes three Cryotherapy machines, six Carbon Dioxide Cylinders just but to mention a few.

EGPAF is financed by American People through United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and US Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Officiating at the event, the Tabora Regional Medical Officer, Dr Leslie Mhina, said that the equipment will be used to support CECAP activities at newly established centers which are Urambo District Hospital, Ndala Mission Hospital and Upuge Health Center for screening and treating clients with pre-cancerous lesions.

He said cervical cancer is the most common cancer in Tanzania and the leading cause of cancer-related morbidity and mortality in women in the country which is caused by Human Papilloma Virus (HPV).

"I'm sure through this support EGPAF anticipates that all women aged 30-50 will be screened for cervical cancer and those with pre-cancerous small lesions will be treated before they become cancer," he added.

In addition to that, he said HIV positive women will be screened annually because of opportunistic

infections due to low immunity, while those with HIV negative status will be screened after every three years as per Tanzania Cervical Cancer guideline.

EGPAF Programme Manager in Tabora Region, Dr Alphaxard Lwitakubi, said the organization started supporting CECAP services in November 2011, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and that more than 41 CECAP service providers have been trained.

He added that up to March 2014, a total of 6,750 women living in Tabora Region had already been screened for CECAP through VIA of whom 461 were found to be VIA positive, while 153 women were suspected to have cervical cancer.

"For Tabora Region, EGPAF has set a total of eight health centers which will be providing CECAP services, this includes Kitete Hospital, Sikonge, Nzega and Igunga District hospitals and Nkinga Mission Hospital," he said.

EGPAF Communications Officer, Mercy Nyanda said the foundation works closely with the government through MoHSW in implementing CECAP services in all health centers, supported by EGPAF and specifically in sites offering Reproductive and Child Health services which include Tabora, Shinyanga, Arusha, Kilimanjaro and Lindi regions.

"Currently, the foundation implements a five-year HIV Care and Treatment Programme through CDC and a five-year, 'Linking Initiatives For the Elimination of Pediatric HIV' (LIFE) Programme through USAID," she added.