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Strategies for improving access to and use of information on cancer by rural women in Tanzania for addressing cancer: a case study of Morogoro rural district

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The main purpose of this study was to establish strategies for improving access to, and use of information on cancer by women in Morogoro Rural District for addressing cancer. Specific objectives were to assess the status of cancer awareness among women in Morogoro Rural District, identify sources of information they consult, identify channels used for dissemination of cancer information to women in Morogoro Rural District. Identify challenges encountered by rural women when accessing information on cancer and to recommend strategies that will enhance dissemination and use of information on cancer.

Social survey method was used for conducting this study. The data were collected from a total of 100 respondents through questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions and observations. The respondents were drawn from four villages: 38 from Kiroka, 27 from Kiziwa, 21 from Lubungu and 14 from Mikese village. The findings of the study indicated that rural women faced many challenges. They had limited access to information on cancer for various reasons. These included unawareness, levels of illiteracy, lack of time, limited sources of information, and unavailability of proper places at which information could be accessed, poor infrastructure such as bad roads, and lack of or interruption of power. The study recommended that in order to deal with the problem of illiteracy adult education programmes be organized. The study also recommends that various media be used for disseminating information so that information can be accessed conveniently by different stakeholders according to their preferences. In addition, health workers, in collaboration with other stakeholders, should be encouraged to diversify ways of disseminating health information. The government should also set aside budget for dissemination of information on cancer as is the case for other diseases such as malaria and HIV/AIDS.