

July 7, 2016

http://www.newvision.co.ug/new_vision/news/1428828/muk-students-app-detect-cervical-cancer

The screenshot shows the New Vision website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, News, Business, Education, Sports, Life and style, Magazines, Jobs, Opportunities, Opinions, Epaper, Stream, Special Editions, and LIVE UPDATE. The main headline is "MUK students make app to detect cervical cancer" by John Agaba, dated 6th July 2016. Below the headline is a "Print" button and a social media sharing section. A sidebar on the right lists "Most Read" and "Most Commented" articles, including "Mother's DNA may affect ageing - study" and "Uganda could miss Softball world meet over standoff with NCS". At the bottom of the article area, there is a form to "Fill in your Name and Email Address to receive a Free Newsletter". The browser's address bar shows the URL: www.newvision.co.ug/new_vision/news/1428828/muk-students-app-detect-cervical-cancer. The taskbar at the bottom shows several open applications, including a PDF viewer and a presentation software.

This screenshot shows a related article on the New Vision website. The headline is "Cervical cancer continues to account for the highest number of new cancer cases among women in Uganda". The main image is a close-up of a woman's hands cupping her lower abdomen. Below the image, the text reads: "An app employing the use of a custom hardware containing sensors and attached to a phone has been". To the right of the article, there is a sidebar with several advertisements and news snippets. The ads include "VICTORIA UNIVERSITY Kampala - Uganda AUG-SEPT 2016 Intake Open", "Preparing you for Success" (featuring a student and a teacher), and "THE ELECTRONIC LICENSING URSE" with a "Need help? Our staff is always ready to help" button. The browser's address bar shows the same URL as the first screenshot. The taskbar at the bottom shows the same set of open applications.

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demonstrated as able to detect the presence of bacterial vaginosis (BV) in a female, when it is immersed in a patient's urine sample.

Principal investigator Margaret Nanyombi, a student of science; information technology at Makerere University, said the mobile application can show a woman has the vagina infection linked to cervical cancer, before seeking improved medical attention.

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Cervical cancer continues to account for the highest number of new cancer cases among women in Uganda. It claims more lives than any other cancer in the country. According to a new study in the journal *JAMA Oncology*, cervical cancer cases in Ugandan women increased from 2,000 to 3,400 between 1990 and 2013.

The application is still being worked on. Yesterday, Nanyombi and the team behind it received \$5000 (sh17m) to improve it further. Nanyombi said the device was expected on market next year.

It is a handy and easy-to-use gadget. Women can tell that they have the infection wherever they are, without having to go to hospital or seeking a doctor's expertise," the student said at an innovations awards ceremony at the university's school of public health in Kampala on Tuesday.

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Much as cervical cancer is linked to human papilloma virus, bacterial vaginosis — the most common vaginal disorder among girls and women in the reproductive age group — has been suggested as a co-factor in development of cervical cancer.

Nanyombi said the phone-based tool that tested for early vaginal bacterial infections would help women monitor their reproductive health system from home.

How it works

You immerse the custom-made device in a tube containing a urine sample. The device will be able to pick values relay the results onto a phone. The device has no side effects because it does not in any way interact with the body.

"While doing research (for her undergraduate), we learnt that one of the long term cause of cervical cancer was bacterial vaginosis (BV). So we decided to create a solution that could help women check for BV, because it does not show signs and symptoms until it is late," she said.

Bacterial vaginosis (BV) is an abnormal vaginal condition that is characterized by vaginal discharge and results from an overgrowth of strange bacteria in the vagina.

At the function, 16 other groups were awarded \$5000 (sh17m) each to concept-develop their innovation ideas. Eleven groups were from Uganda; the rest six from Tanzania, Rwanda and DR Congo. Most of the groups who won had ideas related to improving entrepreneurship and health and better agricultural practices in the country and alleviating gender based violence.

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Nathan Tumuhamy, the director of the Eastern Africa Resilience Africa Network, said the Youth Spark Innovation Grants sought to facilitate innovations that focused on helping real people.

"The priority thematic area centered on floods, drought, disease, epidemics and landslides and gender based violence and refugees and slow pace of recovery after conflict and land disputes," he said.

Prof William Bazeyo, the Dean at the Makerere University School of Public Health and RAN Chief of Party, said another group of innovators from Gayaza High School would travel to California in the USA to participate in this year's Technovation Challenge — from July 10 to 15.


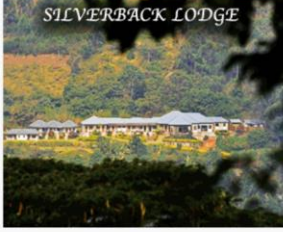
The 10 girls from the school will represent the region after they trounced competition from Makerere Modern Secondary School, Nabisunsa Girls' Secondary School and Mayhill High School in the Technovation Regional Pitch in May.

Sheila Agaba, the Technovation Team Leader, said two representatives (of the girls) — Geraldine Nakayita and Patience Ankunda — would travel to the US to participate in the international innovations challenge.

"Their ideas zeroed on using a Global Positioning System to find market for local produce and on improving youth entrepreneurial skills to find employment. They will travel with their student ambassador Patsy Mugabi and their teacher Ronald Ddungu," she said.

Prof Mondo Kagonyera, Chancellor emeritus at Makerere University, appealed to the youth to be creative and serve their societies and to avoid wasting time in "non-productive things".

He advised the young innovators to work hard, condemning a tendency for many Ugandans "to become rich even without doing anything" as unattainable.



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