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Mobile application can show a woman has the vagina infection linked to cervical cancer,
before seeking medical attention.

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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 — had been suggested as a co-factor in development of cervical cancer.

Nanyembi 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.

“One day during research (for her undergraduate), I learnt that one of the long term causes 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.
Nathan Tumushime, 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.

“Thematic areas centered on food, drought, disease, epidemics and pandemics and gender-based violence and refugees and slow pace of recovery after conflict and land disputes,” he said.

Prof William Baziizi, the Dean at the Makerere University School of Public Health and RAIN 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, Nalukolere 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 Nekayita and Patience Armanda — would travel to the US to participate in the international innovations challenge.

“Their ideas revolved around using a Global Positioning System to find markets for local produce and on improving youth entrepreneurial skills to find employment. They will travel with their student ambassador Patry Mugabi and their teacher Ronald Dilungu,” 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 unsustainable.