

The Global Breast Cancer Initiative

Empowering women,
building capacity,
providing care for all



Breast cancer inequities

Breast cancer is the most common cancer worldwide, and the leading cause of cancer death among women. Additionally, breast cancer deaths disproportionately affect individuals in low- and middle-income countries. Breast cancer five-year survival rates in high-income countries exceed 90%, compared with 66% in India and 40% in South Africa.

INEQUITIES IN BREAST CANCER DEATHS

High-income countries 9 out of 10 survive



India 6 out of 10 survive



South Africa 4 out of 10 survive



*over 5 years

What explains global inequities?

- **Late diagnosis:** Detected at advanced stages
- **Inadequate services:** Insufficient diagnostic and treatment facilities
- **Low coverage:** Failure to include breast cancer in Universal Health Coverage

Several, high-income countries have shown uniform declines in breast cancer mortality rates, year-on-year, for two decades. The 40% reduction in breast cancer mortality seen in high-income countries since the 1980s has yet to be achieved in the majority of low- and middle-income countries.

Effective strategies

Countries with high breast cancer survival rates are characterised by increased levels of coverage of essential health services (universal health coverage) and higher numbers of public cancer centers (access). Among countries achieving sustained mortality reductions, the majority of breast cancers are diagnosed at an early stage, reinforcing the value of effective early detection programmes for improving breast cancer outcomes.

GBCI: operational approach based on 3 pillars of action for national cancer control programmes

Bridging inequities in breast cancer outcomes requires systematic improvements in access to resource-appropriate and quality services. The World Health Organization’s **Global Breast Cancer Initiative (GBCI)**, established in 2021, brings together stakeholders from around the world and across

sectors with the joint goal of reducing global breast cancer mortality. GBCI employs three key strategies:

- 1) health promotion and early detection,
- 2) timely diagnosis, and
- 3) comprehensive breast cancer management.

GBCI aims to reduce global breast cancer mortality by 2.5% per year by 2040 and prevent 2.5 million global cancer deaths.



PILLARS

PILLAR 1: Health promotion for early detection

Public health education to improve awareness of the signs and symptoms, and of the importance of early detection and treatment

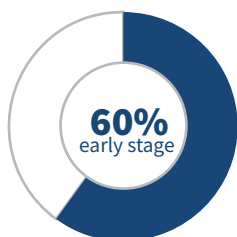
PILLAR 2: Timely diagnosis

Public and health worker education on signs and symptoms of early breast cancer so women are referred to diagnostic services when appropriate

PILLAR 3: Comprehensive breast cancer management

Centralized services and treatment for breast cancer — given that cancer management requires some level of specialized care

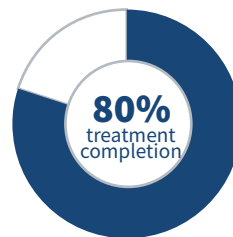
TARGETS



Achieve diagnosis of at least 60% of invasive breast cancers at stage I or II



Evaluation, imaging, tissue sampling and pathology completed within 60 days



80% undergo full courses of multimodality treatment and successfully return home

WHO framework: multisectoral partnerships, promoting sustainable capacity building, innovation and the use of data for monitoring and decision-making

WHO aims to provide guidance to governments across the world on ways to strengthen systems for detecting, diagnosing and treating breast cancer, to further their capacities to manage other types of cancer. It will do so in unison with UN agencies and other partner organizations.



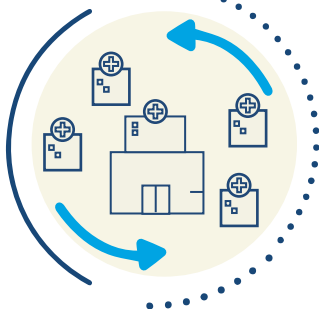
Stakeholder Convening

Bringing global partners together in working groups to address the three GBCI pillars.



Operational Guidance

Developing a technical package to guide the implementation of GBCI through shared learning platforms and following a four-step scheme: Assess, Plan, Implement, and Monitor.



In-country Engagement

Harnessing political will to generate action at the global, regional and local levels through strengthening of partnerships and integrating existing cancer initiatives.

Get Involved

- ▶ Advocate: join global and national advocacy efforts
- ▶ Contribute: join platforms for information-sharing
- ▶ Act: support countries & other stakeholders

For more information, write to: gbc@who.int