

# Prevention & management of CC programs need multi-level strategies.

## Drivers of cervical cancer prevention and management in Sub-Saharan Africa: A qualitative synthesis of mixed studies using Socio-ecological model.

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### INTRODUCTION

- Cervical cancer (CC), caused by oncogenic strains of human papillomavirus (HPV), is a fatal malignancy among women worldwide, prevalent in fragile health systems. The precancerous stages of cervical cancer need several years before invasive cancer develops, offering an ample window for early detection through effective screening and management.
- However, several women in Sub-Saharan Africa face challenges in accessing and utilizing screening services due to various multilabel modifiable drivers that have not been thoroughly studied in the region.

### OBJECTIVE

- To systematically synthesize evidence on the drivers of screening, early detection, and management of cervical cancer in sub-Saharan Africa

### METHODS

- A structured narrative review was conducted, applying the Socio-ecological model and considering studies published from January 1, 2013, to mid-2022.
- 60 studies were included following **PRISMA** guidelines (figure-1).
- key search terms included "detractors," "enablers," "cervical cancer screening," and "sub-Saharan Africa".
- Studies were searched from databases: **HINARI**, **Science Direct**, and **PubMed**, along with **Google Scholar** for relevant grey literature
- Thematic analysis was employed to identify **multilevel drivers**, which were then illustrated using a **socio-ecological framework (Individual, Interpersonal, Provider, Community, Health system & policy levels)**

### RESULTS

Cervical cancer programs influenced by **multi-level drivers** –figure- 2 & 3

**1. Individual-level drivers:** limited knowledge about CC & screening, low perception of risk, unfavorable attitudes, & fear of test results

**2. Interpersonal drivers:** community embarrassment, relationships with health workers, support and encouragement, peer influence, and mothers' networks with others

**3. Provider drivers:** providers' screening skill, training, profession type, counseling skills, providers' gender, provider recommendations, & work commitments.

**4. Community drivers:** stigma, social-cultural norms, social networks & beliefs.

**5. System & policy drivers:** distant facilities, resource allocation, screening costs, promotional strategies, management hurdles, inadequate infrastructure, centralized policies

### CONCLUSIONS

- Prevention & management of CC programs requires multi-level strategies across individual, organizational, community, and health policy levels. Programs should be designed to address **multilevel challenges**.

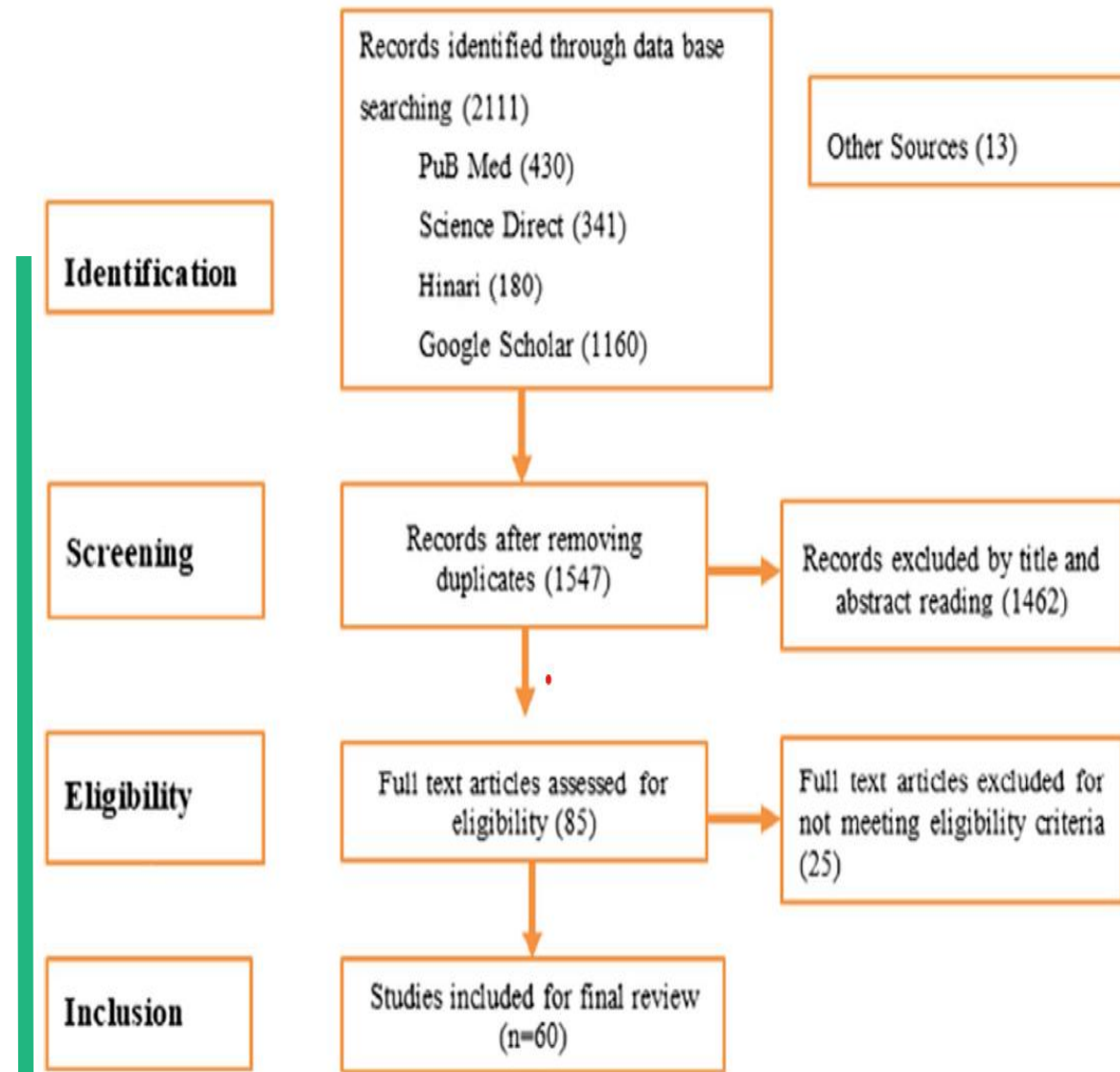


Figure-1: PRISMA flow chart

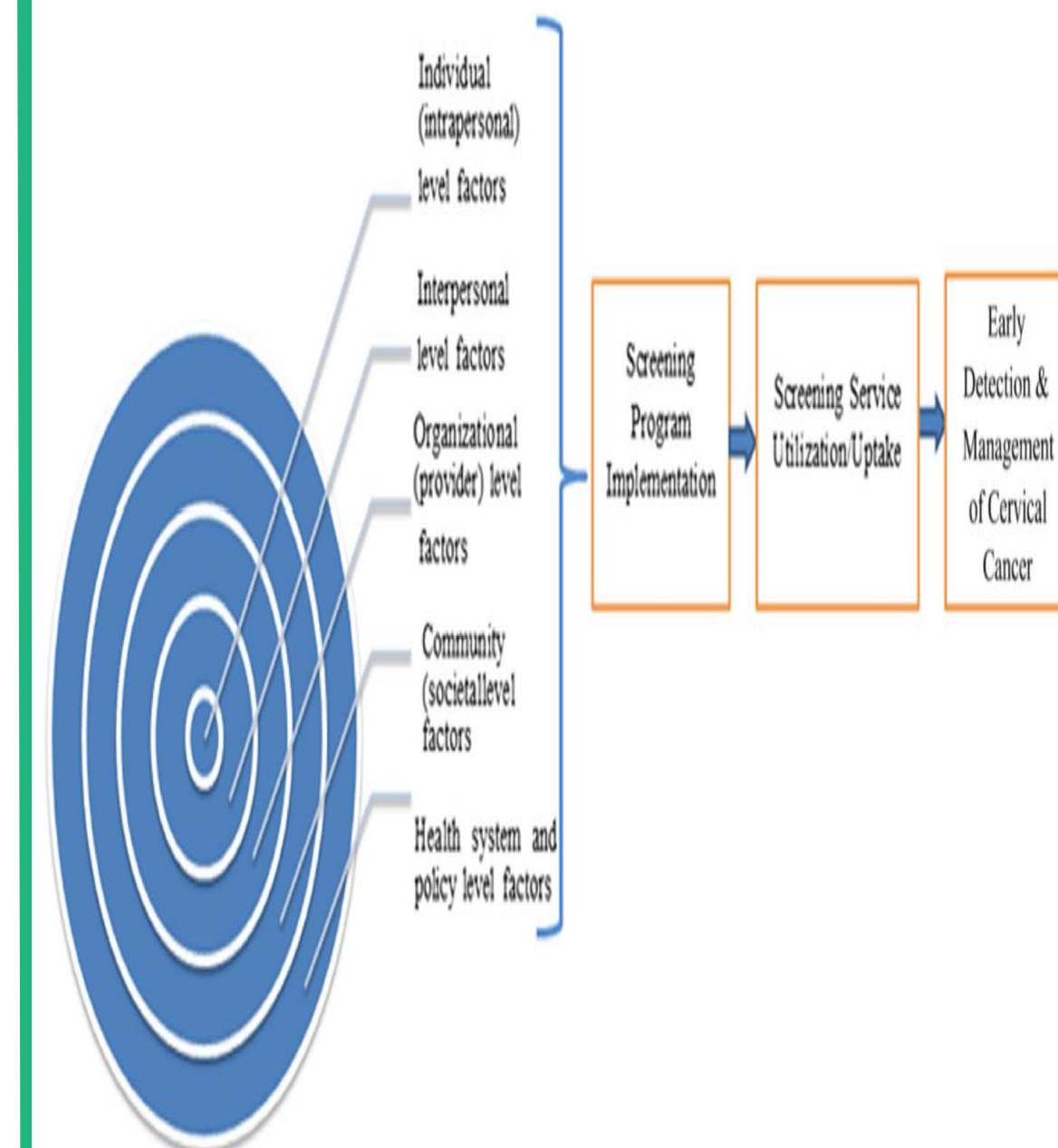


Fig. 2 A socio-ecological framework of drivers and detractors of cervical cancer screening, early detection and treatment programmes in sub-Saharan Africa 2022

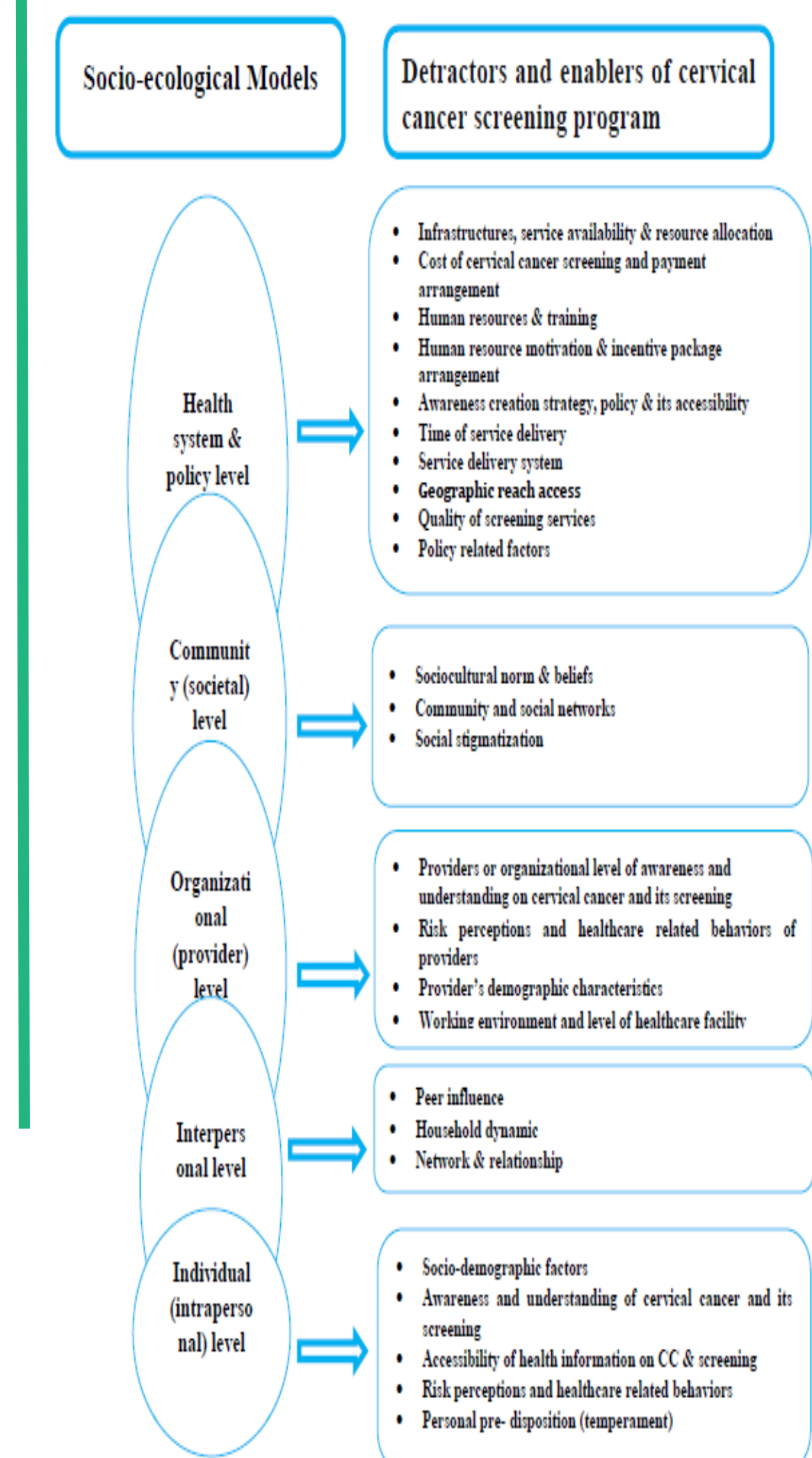


Fig.3: Drivers of cervical cancer screening program implementation

