

# IRCAD Africa Enhances Breast Cancer Screening in Rwanda with Telehealth Technology



***Rwanda, April 16, 2025* — IRCAD Africa is joining Rwanda’s national breast cancer screening initiative by integrating advanced telehealth technology to improve access to quality care—especially in remote and underserved communities.**

Since 2022, the Elekta Foundation and the Rwanda Biomedical Center (RBC), in partnership with other stakeholders, have integrated breast cancer screening into existing cervical cancer programs across several districts in Rwanda, with ongoing expansion. Through a dual-screening approach, women are screened for both cervical and breast cancer, supporting early detection and better long-term health outcomes.

"We are thrilled to partner with the Elekta Foundation to bring this cutting-edge technology to Rwanda," said Dr. Michelle Smith, Medical Director and Acting Director General of IRCAD Africa. "The Teladoc™ robot, provided by the World Telehealth Initiative, will revolutionize how we deliver healthcare, making specialist services more accessible to women in need throughout Rwanda."

To strengthen this initiative, IRCAD Africa and the Elekta Foundation are introducing telehealth services using the Teladoc™ robot, provided by the World Telehealth Initiative. This technology enables real-time remote consultations, allowing specialists to review medical images and provide expert input without requiring travel. It increases access to radiologists for interpreting breast ultrasounds, boosting the efficiency of the screening program. Additionally, it reduces the burden on patients and providers by minimizing travel, while also supporting training and capacity building for local healthcare workers.

"This partnership reflects the Elekta Foundation’s commitment to advancing innovative, scalable solutions in cancer care," said Lacy Hubbard, President and CEO of the Elekta Foundation.

According to WHO global estimates reveal striking inequities in the breast cancer burden according to human development. For instance, in countries with a very high Human Development Index (HDI), 1 in 12 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime and 1 in 71 women die of it. In contrast, in countries with a low HDI; while only 1 in 27 women is diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime, 1 in 48 women will die from it.

<sup>1</sup>=Future projections of new cases and deaths on breast cancer 2040 are:

- More than 3 million new cases per year (an increase of 40%).
- More than 1 million deaths per year (an increase of 50%).

Telemedicine holds immense potential—not only to expand access today, but also to shape the future of healthcare, particularly in Africa where access remains a critical challenge.

"Telehealth has the potential to bridge the gap between urban and rural healthcare services," said Sharon Allen, CEO of the World Telehealth Initiative. "We are proud to provide the Teladoc™ robot to support this vital initiative."

## **Further inquiries please contact**

**Irac Africa**, dr. Michelle Smith, Acting Director General  
[michelle.smith@ircad.africa](mailto:michelle.smith@ircad.africa), WhatsApp +1-210-394-5609

**Elekta Foundation**, Lacy Hubbard, President  
[lacy.hubbard@elektafoundation.com](mailto:lacy.hubbard@elektafoundation.com), mobile: +1 (314) 368 8423

**Elekta Foundation**, Cornilla von Plomgren, External Relations & Partnerships  
[cornilla.vonplomgren@elektafoundation.com](mailto:cornilla.vonplomgren@elektafoundation.com), mobile: +46 (70) 655 31 73

### **About Elekta Foundation**

The Elekta Foundation is a Swedish NGO working to improve access to cancer care in underserved countries. Through innovation, collaboration, and local capacity building, the Foundation aims to advance early detection, diagnosis, and treatment—improving health outcomes for women. Work is divided into two areas, training & education and awareness & prevention. Some results include over 180,000 women having undergone cervical cancer screening and over 140,000 women having been screened for breast cancer. More information is available on [www.elektafoundation.com](http://www.elektafoundation.com)

### **About IRCAD Africa**

IRCAD Africa is a leading center for training and research in minimally invasive surgery, located in Kigali, Rwanda. Established in October 2023, it is the first such center on the African continent and part of the global IRCAD network. Its mission is to train African surgeons in advanced surgical techniques and to advance research in minimally invasive surgery and utilizes artificial intelligence to improve diagnostic and surgical capabilities. Since its inception, IRCAD Africa has trained over 400 surgeons from 27 African countries, significantly enhancing surgical standards across the continent. More information is available on [www.ircad.space](http://www.ircad.space)

### **About Rwanda Biomedical Center (RBC)**

The Rwanda Biomedical Center is the implementing agency of the Ministry of Health in Rwanda. It oversees the delivery of health services, disease prevention, and health research across the country. More information is available on [www.rbc.gov.rw](http://www.rbc.gov.rw)

### **About World Telehealth Initiative**

The World Telehealth Initiative is a global organization dedicated to expanding access to healthcare through telehealth technologies. It provides solutions like the Teladoc™ robot to enable remote medical consultations and training. More information is available on [World Telehealth Initiative](http://WorldTelehealthInitiative)

### **More information about breast cancer:**

-About Breast Cancer, WHO, [Breast cancer](#)

-<sup>1</sup>=Global statistics for 2020 and 2024,

[Current and future burden of breast cancer: global statistics for 2020 and 2040 – IARC](#)