A Western Australian orthopaedic surgeon who has provided surgical services to the people of Papua New Guinea for many years has now extended the scope of his involvement by winning the funding needed to help reduce the high rates of cervical cancer in the country.

Professor David Wood has received funding to run a one-year pilot program to provide Gardasil vaccinations to 15,000 girls which prevents the transmission of the most common strains of the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), a precursor of the cancer. The project began in March across the West New Britain province and is funded to provide at least three million doses of the vaccine to developing countries where more than 85 per cent of cases can be prevented.

"Even though I don't treat these cases it is impossible to be unaffected by such unnecessary suffering, so I thought it important to help prevent this if possible."

Professor Wood, who is the Winthrop Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of Western Australia, works out of the Hollywood Private Hospital which supported his campaign by contributing $20,000 through a charity dinner to help cover the costs of the application and feasibility study necessary to win the funding.

He said West New Britain had been chosen for the pilot project because of the keen support of the Governor, the CEO of the local hospital in Kimbe, Dr Victor Golpek, and the enthusiasm of health and education representatives.

He said the Gardasil Access program would provide 46,000 vaccine doses for girls aged from 9 to 13 years which represented three vaccinations per child. In Australia the vaccines cost $125 per injection, meaning that the total value of the vaccines donated will be almost $6 million.

"Developing nations can never afford to pay such a cost, yet they have the greatest need," Professor Wood said.

"Most women are offered no screening and have limited access to pathology which invariably leads to late presentation.

"In West New Britain, for example, only about 300 pap smear tests are conducted per year for a population of 300,000."

Professor Wood is now a member of the Cervical Cancer Working Party which will oversee the pilot program and said there was hope that the project could be rolled-out in following years as a national public health program.

He said that an initial education campaign had been run in September and October last year to train health workers in the provision of the vaccine and the need for consent while teachers were then offered training to allow them to explain the project to children.

More than 2000 school children have so far attended such information sessions with plans now underway to make HPV and cervical cancer prevention an on-going subject within the personal health component of the PNG school curriculum along with HIV AIDS.

Professor Wood said that while there was initial hesitation in speaking of sexual health matters, the children had been keen to learn.

"Everyone in PNG knows someone who has been affected by cervical cancer so the most common reaction even from the boys is: How can we protect our sisters and our mothers?"

"Everyone in PNG knows someone who has been affected by cervical cancer so the most common reaction even from the boys is: How can we protect our sisters and our mothers?"

In Australia the vaccines cost $125 per injection, meaning that the total value of the vaccines donated will be almost $6 million.

"Developing nations can never afford to pay such a cost, yet they have the greatest need," Professor Wood said.

"Most women are offered no screening and have limited access to pathology which invariably leads to late presentation.

Professor Wood is now a member of the Cervical Cancer Working Party which will oversee the pilot program and said there was hope that the project could be rolled-out in following years as a national public health program.

He said that an initial education campaign had been run in September and October last year to train health workers in the provision of the vaccine and the need for consent while teachers were then offered training to allow them to explain the project to children.

More than 2000 school children have so far attended such information sessions with plans now underway to make HPV and cervical cancer prevention an on-going subject within the personal health component of the PNG school curriculum along with HIV AIDS.

Professor Wood said that while there was initial hesitation in speaking of sexual health matters, the children had been keen to learn.

"Everyone in PNG knows someone who has been affected by cervical cancer so the most common reaction even from the boys is: How can we protect our sisters and our mothers?"

"Everyone in PNG knows someone who has been affected by cervical cancer so the most common reaction even from the boys is: How can we protect our sisters and our mothers?"

He said that an initial education campaign had been run in September and October last year to train health workers in the provision of the vaccine and the need for consent while teachers were then offered training to allow them to explain the project to children.

More than 2000 school children have so far attended such information sessions with plans now underway to make HPV and cervical cancer prevention an on-going subject within the personal health component of the PNG school curriculum along with HIV AIDS.

"Everyone in PNG knows someone who has been affected by cervical cancer so the most common reaction even from the boys is: How can we protect our sisters and our mothers?"

"Everyone in PNG knows someone who has been affected by cervical cancer so the most common reaction even from the boys is: How can we protect our sisters and our mothers?"

Professor Wood said that while there was initial hesitation in speaking of sexual health matters, the children had been keen to learn.

"Everyone in PNG knows someone who has been affected by cervical cancer so the most common reaction even from the boys is: How can we protect our sisters and our mothers?"

"Everyone in PNG knows someone who has been affected by cervical cancer so the most common reaction even from the boys is: How can we protect our sisters and our mothers?"

"Everyone in PNG knows someone who has been affected by cervical cancer so the most common reaction even from the boys is: How can we protect our sisters and our mothers?"