



Prevention of Avoidable Blindness Program in Mpanda, Tanzania



Our project in the Rukwa region with its capital Sumbawanga started in 2017. The programme provides ad hoc help in the form of so-called eye camps, but its main aim is sustainable ophthalmic care in very remote and structurally weak regions of Tanzania. It also promotes the training of local workers and the development of stable structures. It has now established a comprehensive provision with an ophthalmic center and a new eye clinic. This year the focus of the project was placed on the neighbouring region of Katavi to the north. In July and October – supported by a 10-person volunteer team from Germany – two Eye Camps took place in the capital Mpanda. More than 20 trained ophthalmic nurses supported the work on site. A small eye clinic, in form of an improvised outpatient department (OPD), was set up for one week at a time.

The ophthalmic nurses were taking a brief medical history and conducted eye tests. At first, the patient is examined at one of the three examination units by an ophthalmologist using a slit lamp. After that the ophthalmic nurses will examine the patient using the well-known **Arclight Ophthalmoscope**. The result will first be stated by the ophthalmic nurses, then a diagnosis will be made and a therapy proposal will be issued. Interesting cases are re-examined in small groups.

Well over 1,000 patients were treated in this way during the two camps, and more than 300 eyes were operated on. The ophthalmic nurses are trained so well that they can examine patients and treat simple cases at their local workplaces in remote parts of the country; complicated cases are referred to larger centers. (such as Sumbawanga). Thanks to intensive training and the Arclight ophthalmoscope.

For further information:: <https://www.tanzaneye.de/aktuelles>

By **Dr. Karsten Paust** – Project director – TanZanEye e.V.

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