



DIAMOND JUBILEE TRUST TRACHOMA INITIATIVE

Case study interviewed by:	
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Organization	Blantyre Institute for Community Ophthalmology

Case study details	
Name	Bekanese Luhanga
Age	48
Gender	Male
Location	Machinga District Hospital
Project name	Trachoma Elimination Project
Parents Name	Luhanga
Parents Occupation	
Siblings-name /age	
Other info	Married and has 5 children and 1 grand child

This case study is about a: (Mark box with an X)			
Child with Trachoma	<input type="checkbox"/>	Child with Trichiasis	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adults with Trachoma	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adult with Trichiasis	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ophthalmologist	<input type="checkbox"/>
Surgeon X	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Health Worker	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

Summary

Bekanese Luhanga comes from Kopakopa village in T/A Nthalire, Chitipa District. He is married and has 5 children and 1 grandchild. Currently he is working at Machinga District Hospital as Ophthalmic Clinical Officer. He is one of the Ophthalmic Clinical Officers who were trained by Sightsavers to perform TT

surgeries in November 2014 and was certified as a TT surgeon in March 2015. So far he has performed 183 TT surgeries since December 2014. Before this training he was unable to do any TT surgeries but after being trained and certified as a TT surgeon, he has performed around TT 253 surgeries in Machinga.

Transcript of Interview

Q1 Job title and core responsibilities (or job qualification studying for)

Answer: Ophthalmic Clinical Officer (OCO) with the following duties and responsibilities.

1. Treating all eye infections
2. Performing minor surgeries
3. Fitting processes
4. Performing extra ocular surgeries
5. Performing any other duties assigned by ophthalmologists

Q2 What do you like about your job?

Answer: Assisting people to have a better sight

Q3. How long have you been doing this work, and what motivated you to become an Ophthalmic Clinical Officer?

Answer: I have been working as an OCO for five years now. I always wanted to be an eye specialist so when the opportunity arose for this training I applied and was successful

Q4 What training have you undertaken?

Answer: I did a training as Ophthalmic Clinical Officer for 1 and half years between 2009 and 2010. I was also trained as a TT surgeon in November 2014

Q5 What do you enjoy most about your work?

Answer: Most of the results are instant or successful for example people who have problems in seeing due to TT are able to have a normal sight soon after being corrected through surgery.

Q6 What do you find most challenging?

Answer: Glaucoma case are challenging mostly prognosis – This is so because the effects of this condition brings permanent blindness which cannot be corrected

Q7 Do you have an inspiring story you could tell us of someone you've treated?

Answer: Yes, several of them but in particular patients of TT. I have performed TT surgeries on some people who almost lost hope concerning their condition but after being treated they are now very fine. Like the story you capture last time of Aubi Chimesya.

Q8 Is there enough support from the government/local/regional authority for your work? Are there salary gaps etc?

Answer: Very little support from government mainly when an OCO wants to upgrade

Additional Interview (s0 if any)

Question: Before the TT Surgeon training in November 2014, were you able to conduct TT Surgeries even after qualifying as an OCO? If no, explain why?

Ans: I was not able to any TT surgeries before being trained by Sightsavers even though I was an OCO. This was so because I didn't have the skills to perform such surgeries and I needed certification as well.

Question: After the training, how many TT Surgeries have you conducted both in the district and outside? How has been the outcome from your perspective?

Ans: I have conducted over 200 surgeries in Machinga alone. I was also able to support other district like Nsanje when the trained OCO was on sick leave.

Location information and context

This cases study is from Machinga District Hospital. Machinga is a district in the Southern Region of Malawi. The district covers an area of 3,771 km.² and has a population of 369,614.

Machinga contains seven National Assembly constituencies: Machinga - Central East, Machinga - North East, Machinga - South East, Machinga Likwenu, Machinga South, Machinga-Central and Machinga-East

The Machinga District Hospital is located in the district that carries the same name. It is located in the southern region of the country a few miles east of the Liwonde Game Park, and northwest of Lake Chilwa, the second largest lake in the country. Around the lake there are 335 villages with over 60,000 inhabitants engaging in fishing. They catch over 17,000 metric tons of fish each year. The district of Machinga covers an area of 3,771 square km, and has a population of 369,614 people.

The district hospital is one of the major referral health facilities in Malawi. It is one of 28 district facilities to which small health centers refer their patients. Machinga is frequently faced with a shortage of all types of medicine and medical supplies. This 300-bed facility struggles to provide essential services to a referral population of 538,345 people.

Project background & information

The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust is a charitable foundation established in 2012 to mark and celebrate Her Majesty The Queen's 60 year contribution to the Commonwealth. The Trust has received donations from governments, corporate partners, trusts, foundations, community groups and individuals from across the Commonwealth. Its mission is to enrich the lives of people from all backgrounds within the Commonwealth, and its programmes work in alliance towards eliminating avoidable blindness and to empower a new generation of young leaders. With a five year timeframe in which to deliver successful programmes, the Trust's aim is to leave a lasting legacy, owned by the whole Commonwealth, to honor Her Majesty The Queen.

The Trachoma Initiative in Malawi is being coordinated by Sightsavers and delivered by ICTC members: Sightsavers, CBM, AMREF Health Africa, Water Aid and Blantyre Institute for Community Ophthalmology (BICO)

BICO is implementing Surgery and Antibiotics (S & A) of the SAFE strategy in addition to conducting surveys such as; Trachoma Impact Survey, surveillance Surveys & Drug Coverage survey in all the 15 Trachoma endemic districts in Malawi. BICO is implementing Surgery (TT) and Antibiotics in Chikwawa, Nsanje and Machinga. Antibiotics (MDA) only in Mchinji, Ntcheu, Mangochi and Dowa.

List included documents



Bekanese Luhanga doing TT surgery at Ntaja Health Centre



Bekanes Luhanga explaining to case finders on identification of TT patients during a case finders training in Ntaja