



Western Province Blindness Prevention Programme, Rwanda

BLINDNESS IN RWANDA

- **82%** of blindness cases are preventable
- **Cataract** accounts for **66.7%** of these cases.
- There are **11 ophthalmologists** in Rwanda (population 10.3m) - most are based in urban areas.



When left untreated, blindness and visual impairment can result in lost education and employment opportunities, as well as an impaired quality of life. Blindness prevents parents from providing for their dependents and very often children are called upon to act as carers, taking them out of school, and depriving them of an education.

WHERE WE WORK

Health provision in Rwanda is extremely poor, but the country is committed to improving the situation. This commitment is starting to pay off, with life expectancy increasing from 39 to 50 years over the past decade. However, eye health provision remains inadequate, with low treatment rates and poor surgical outcomes. Since 2006, The Foundation has been providing eye health services in remote areas of the country, particularly the Western Province, which has especially high rates of cataract and trachoma.



WHAT WE DO

We work closely with local partners and eye care institutions such as the Gisenyi Eye Unit, increasing their capability to deliver high quality services to impoverished rural communities currently lacking access to eye health practitioners. We achieve this through the provision of equipment for clinics and outreach clinics, technology, and training for local doctors and health care professionals. We are also working with the Rwandan Government to raise the profile of blindness as a public health issue.

THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE

By treating those suffering from avoidable blindness in Rwanda, The Foundation and its partners help create opportunities for patients to regain their independence. Since we embarked on the programme, The Foundation's support has trained more eye health professionals, provided modern equipment, and greatly strengthened service delivery. However, there remains much work to be done to ensure that no Rwandan citizen is needlessly blind.

If you wish to support this project please visit

www.hollows.org.uk/donate/

Or contact:

The Fred Hollows Foundation (UK)
12-15 Crawford Mews
York Street
London W1H 1LX
Tel: 020 7298 2340
Email: fhfuk@hollows.org www.hollows.org.uk