

REACH Bwindi

2020 Vision: Sight4Bwindi Newsletter #3 – January 2020



Breaking News:

- **Eye Care Services at Bwindi Community Hospital have commenced!**
- **Support for the project is growing and momentum is gathering; in the last two weeks we have been awarded grants from both The Lions and the James Tudor Foundation. In total, we have now raised more than 50% of our target!**

2020 is already proving to be a very special year for eyes in the Bwindi community. **Bwindi Community Hospital (BCH) have employed their first full time ophthalmic nurse** and we are delighted to welcome Alex to his new role.

Alex is no stranger to the people of Bwindi. He worked at the Hospital when he first qualified as a trained nurse. At that time no eye care services were available and Alex was struck by the number of people in the community who went blind needlessly; he decided to fund himself to take the Diploma in Ophthalmology course at Jinja and in 2011, he qualified as one of the country's 250 Ophthalmic Clinical Officers.



Alex returned to BCH but because there was no eye clinic, no equipment and no budget to support an eye care service, his employment was short lived. Instead, Alex went to work at Matanda transit camp, where he gathered valuable experience, working alongside *Médecins Sans Frontières* doctors, treating refugees' eye problems.



But now things have changed! With the advent of BCH's new eye clinic, its wide range of ophthalmic equipment, plus a budget to support salaries Alex, now 41, has jumped at the chance to return to his community and he was an obvious choice for BCH too. With one eye on providing a quality eye care service and the other on conducting research, Alex's appointment is great news for the Hospital and a very significant step forward for our project. Things are really looking up for the eyes of Bwindi!

We will continue to send regular updates so...watch this space!

Enormous thanks to *everyone* for your ongoing support!

from *Fiona, Kirsty, Rosemary and Debbie*