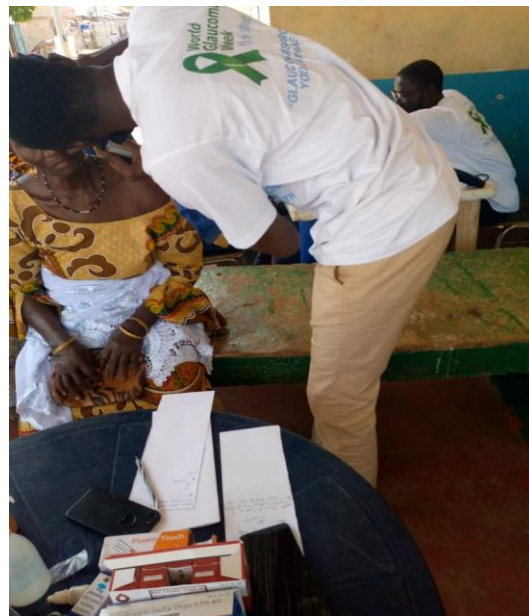




**REPORT OF EYE SCREENING CONDUCTED IN NORTH BANK WEST  
(NBW) BY THE EYE UNIT OF ESSAU DISTRICT HOSPITAL IN MARCH  
2023.**

Essau District Hospital is located in Essau village in Lower Nuimi District in the North Bank Region-West. It was established in 1948 with a catchment area population of 43,686 inhabitants (GBOS: 2013). The Hospital is very important for people of this region because it the only referral Hospital in the region for all the surrounding Major and Minor health centres in the region. The Essau District Hospital Eye unit was established in 1996 and since then continue to provide a comprehensive eye service to the people of the region and beyond.



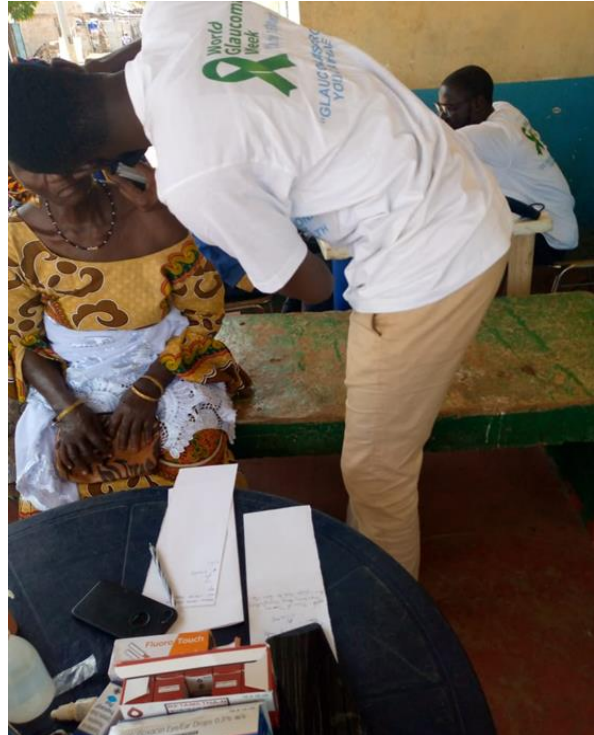
Essau District Hospital Secondary Eye Unit through the National Eye Health Programme (**NEHP**) received funding from an organization called **CATARACTS ARE CURABLE (CAC)** to conduct community screening for patients with eye conditions within Lower Niumi, Upper Niumi and Jokadou. The activity was commenced after receiving the funds.

The communities were informed about the plan activity using various means of communication, eg. making series of announcements on the local community radio as well as moving from one community to another. The screening was done in the three districts of North Bank West. The screening was a success because the communities take ownership in the dissemination of the information in the mosques as well as the WhatsApp groups. They continue to make follow up called especially those blind from cataract and are given hope to recover their sight through surgery.



A total six (6) communities were screened. Three hundred and ninety-one {391} people were seen during the screening. Seventy (70) of them had cataracts that need surgical intervention while the rest had other eye conditions as shown in the table below. Three (3) paediatric cataracts were referred to SZRECC for surgery. There was one severe trachoma trichiasis (TT) case which was refer to the unit for surgery and was successfully done. The glaucoma suspected cases were also referred to SZRECC for further review and management.

	Cataract	Glaucoma	Allergic Conjunctivitis	Trichiasis	Bacterial Conj.	Vernal conj.	TOTAL
Essau	40	3	79	0	6	20	<b>148</b>
Amdallai	4	0	17	0	3	15	<b>39</b>
Ndungu Kebbeh	9	4	26	0	8	18	<b>65</b>
Fass	12	2	24	1	5	11	<b>55</b>
Munagain	3	0	20	0	11	15	<b>49</b>
Medina S.	2	1	16	0	6	10	<b>35</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>391</b>



During the course of the exercise, all those who needed medication were given them free of charge. The glaucoma patients who were already diagnosed, received their medication.

## **CHALLENGES**

There were challenges encountered during this exercise. The first one is inadequate staffing. The eye unit currently has only one cataract surgeon and one nurse assistant. This has made it almost impossible to do routine community outreaches to provide eye health services. Second, **lack of mobility to carry out community outreach.** We relied on vehicles of RHD to conduct our community activities. On many occasions we have difficulty especially if the screening coincides with the activities of the RHD.

The other challenges faced during the screening as narrated by the community members themselves are the inability for them to get to the health service point. This is due to either lack of transport or inability to pay fares to reach those service points.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- The eye unit needs to be strengthened both in terms of human and materials resources so that we can make community outreach a routine activity. We were using the non-contact tonometer, which is heavy and difficult to carry alone in the field. Providing the modern hand-held pressure monitoring devices like the “ICare” would be of great help. Secondly it cannot be use in communities where there is no electricity.
- Community sensitisations need to be strengthened so as to allay any misconceptions of eye surgery and to increase their awareness on the available eye health service.

Essau district Hospital through the eye unit would like to register our gratitude to the NGO: **CATARACTS ARE CURABLE** through the **NEHP** secretariat and **Mr Alassana Touray** for sponsoring this screening activity.

**The community screening was conducted by:**

- 1. Mr Alagie Nget SOMA**
- 2. Mr Famara Sanyang OMA**
- 3. Mr Ebrima SAnyang OMA student**
- 4. Mrs Isatou Jabang SNA**

**COMPILED BY:**

**ALAGIE NGET**

**SIGNED.....**

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**CATARACT SURGEON**

**ESSAU DISTRICT HOSPITAL**

Cc:

Program Manager, NEHP

DPM, NEHP

PPO, NEHP

Mr Alassana Touray, POMA SCRECC

Mr Jim Phillips, CAC

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