

Trachoma initiative

CELEBRATING SUCCESS ON THE ROAD TO NATIONAL TRACHOMA ELIMINATION IN UGANDA

Today, a celebration takes place in Dokolo, Uganda, where, due to the Trachoma Initiative's expansion into 6 (DLI) new districts in the East, West and North of Uganda with the support of Lions Clubs International Foundation.

The celebration event will be attended by senior country officials including representatives from the Ministry of Health and other key partners involved in the delivery of the Trust's Trachoma Initiative in Uganda.

Uganda is a trachoma-endemic country in East Africa where an estimated 10 million* people are at risk of developing the disease. The Trust's Trachoma Initiative was launched in Uganda in November 2014 to tackle the disease. It is anticipated that this expansion in the Trachoma Initiative, matching work funded by USAID, will enable Uganda to achieve national elimination of trachoma across the country by early 2019.

Trachoma is caused by a bacterium called chlamydia trachomatis and it affects both children and adults. If not treated, trachoma can lead to irreversible blindness. The careful distribution of azithromycin helps reduce the prevalence of trachoma by interrupting the life cycle of trachoma causing microorganisms. The mass antibiotic distribution is funded and delivered by USAID / RTI through their 'Envision' programme. All antibiotic drugs for the programme have been donated by Pfizer.

The Trust's Trachoma Initiative supports both the surgery required to help those who already have trachoma trichiasis and investments in facial cleanliness and environmental improvement activities. All people with the advanced stage of the disease are offered free surgery under this programme. This simple operation corrects their in-turned eyelashes and

and our remarkable partners towards the elimination of the disease across the country by 2019."

The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust ('the Trust') is a charitable foundation established

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The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust is a charitable foundation established in 2012 to mark and celebrate Her Majesty The Queen's lifetime of Service 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 honour Her Majesty The Queen.

For more information please visit www.jubileetribute.org

About the Lions Clubs International Foundation

Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) is the official charitable organization of Lions Clubs International, a leading humanitarian organization.

Since founding in 1968 they have strived to sustain Lions' humanitarian service goals throughout the world, awarding over 13,000 grants totalling more than one billion US dollars.

They support the Lions' work across the globe in four key areas, including sight saving, serving youth, disaster relief and meeting humanitarian needs. Donations from 1.4+ million Lions in 210 countries and geographic areas provide the vast majority of the revenue received by LCIF.

For more information please visit <http://www.lionsclubs.org>

About the International Coalition for Trachoma Control (ICTC)

The International Coalition for Trachoma Control (ICTC) is a coalition of non-governmental, donor, private sector, training and research organizations bound by a strong sense of collaboration that exemplifies how an international public-private partnership can achieve remarkable results. Established in 2004, ICTC contributes to global efforts to eliminate trachoma by supporting the Alliance for the Global Elimination of Trachoma by 2020 and by advocating for and implementing the WHO-endorsed approach for treatment and prevention, the SAFE strategy.

Progress towards the elimination of blinding trachoma over the last decade demonstrates the incredible impact of increased partnership within the trachoma community: the number of surgeries undertaken has increased from 22,000 in 2004 to over 230,000 in 2013; drug distribution has rapidly expanded from about 4 million in 2004 to almost 55 million doses in 2013 and important gains have been made on both the facial cleanliness and environmental improvement components of the SAFE strategy, often in collaboration with other sector-wide

About the ICTC Implementing partners in Uganda

The Trachoma Initiative in Uganda is being coordinated by