



Ngorongoro Crater 2015: Healthcare Clinics

The people, the colors, the singing and the beading were amazing. The need for healthcare was great.

The Health & Hope team joined forces with Tanzanian doctors to provide healthcare in 2 areas of Tanzania, the Maasai of the Ngorongoro Area, and villagers of Mwanza on Lake Victoria. Our clinics offered vision, dental and medical treatment to over 1000 people, with delivery of 1 service, but often all 3. Cataract surgeries for an additional 29 Maasai villagers were arranged in coordination with Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Center (KCMC). Our medications were obtained through Blessings International or purchased locally.

We were honored to be the first NGO to bring portable healthcare opportunity to the Maasai of the Ngorongoro Crater, which has medical dispensaries, but no opportunity for vision or dental care. We arrived at Nainokanoka, a village without electricity or plumbing, during a late rainy season in May. Our clinics were established in an earthen floor church. Accommodations were indoor camping with meals prepared by our local cook, enjoyed by the glow of solar lanterns from MPOWERD, who donated 175 lanterns for HHF to deliver to villagers.

During our 5-day clinic in Nainokanoka we treated over 500 individuals, most consulting with more than one department. The highest demand for care was in the vision clinic where we were joined by 2 Tanzanian optometrists. The majority of patients had bacterial eye infections, allergic itchy eyes, and uncorrected vision for which they received prescription lenses for both near and far sighted correction. Visual problems more unique to this area were extreme photosensitivity and cataract formation. Operable cataracts, related to sun exposure and elevation, were identified in 33 eyes. Our local HHF administrator coordinated with KCMC such that a HHF donation could make possible surgical correction for restored vision in July 2015. Photosensitivity was seen in 30% of adolescents. In 2007, local cultivation and home gardens became "unlawful". As a result, sources of vitamin A and B are limited. Clinical signs of vitamin deficiencies were observed in the vision and dental clinics. Photo chromatic lenses were provided to students needing vision correction and sunglasses to others. For high-quality glasses in the NGO setting, we obtain our glasses from Restoring Vision and Shark Eyes.

Dental care was in demand, keeping our 3 dentists busy. HHF team volunteers maintain an effective sterilization area even though we were in a remote setting. We were without power 70% of the time as the available generator was erratic, however Luci solar lanterns provided clinic light. Some teeth were

restored, but most patients required extraction for badly infected and broken teeth. As dental disease is often a preventable one, we emphasize education and delivered 350 toothbrushes.

The most frequent medical need was for bacterial respiratory and ear infections. Most of the Masai live in dried dung circular homes with a central cooking fire, which does not exhaust outdoors. Dust and smoke are a constant part of life. The consequences, combined with limited diet options and group living, create challenges to limiting respiratory infections and their spread. HHF encourages Tippy Tap hand wash stations and build one with the villagers for common use. The EC-Kit was used to teach water safety, and test local sources. These were found to be contaminated with E.coli.

Women's healthcare is in need throughout the world. Our team included a Tanzanian midwife instructor who gathered women to review sexual safety and family planning. While the men were making the Tippy Tap, the women joined in a class review of female hormone changes and the menstrual cycle. This was new material. They had assumed their monthly bleeding was caused by heavy work.

One hundred of the Days for Girls washable feminine hygiene kits, made by our At-Home volunteers, were delivered to Maasai women. The ladies loved the kits and wanted to learn how to make more. We left fabric for many more kits to be made, and spent an afternoon teaching them how to sew the liners and shields...by hand as functional treadle sewing machines were not available.

We were pleased with our contributions which continue to impact this Maasai community through improved health, preventative education, and ongoing HHF community health and safety programs for clean water and sanitation.



Health & Hope Foundation is immersed into the fabric of Tanzania and will be returning in June 2020 to continue our contributions to community health care.