



VISION FOR THE FUTURE:  
PEDIATRIC EYE SCREENING REPORT  
TENWEK HOSPITAL, KENYA



## INTRODUCTION: CHANGING PEDIATRIC EYE CARE IN KENYA

Since December 2025, Tenwek Hospital in Kenya has conducted an unbelievable 495 pediatric vision screenings, marking the first official report from Tenwek under this initiative. In such a short span of time, this level of outreach is truly remarkable. Of the 495 children screened, 214 passed their vision screening while 274 were identified as needing further evaluation, reflecting that approximately 56% of children screened required follow-up care. These findings highlight both the tremendous need for pediatric eye care services and the critical importance of early detection. Without screenings like these, many of these children would likely have continued struggling with undiagnosed vision problems affecting their learning and daily activities.

Among the children who did not pass the screening, refractive errors were the most common findings. Astigmatism was identified in approximately 47% of failed screenings, closely followed by myopia (nearsightedness) at about 45%. Gaze and eye alignment concerns were present in nearly 20% of cases, while hyperopia (farsightedness) accounted for roughly 12%. It's important to note that these percentages add up to more than 100% because many children had more than one condition at the same time—for example, a child could have both myopia and astigmatism, or a refractive error along with a gaze problem. This overlap shows the complexity of vision issues that can easily go unnoticed without proper assessment. These numbers clearly demonstrate that a significant proportion of students were trying to learn while coping with blurred vision, focusing difficulties, or alignment problems—challenges that can easily be mistaken for lack of attention or academic disinterest.



## TRANSFORMING LIVES

One particularly moving story reflects the impact of this work. A seven-year-old boy from a small village had quietly struggled in school for months. Sitting in the back row, he assumed that blurred chalk writing, fuzzy faces, and daily headaches were normal experiences. His teachers believed he was distracted, and his parents thought he simply lacked interest in his studies. After a teacher referred him for an eye examination at the hospital, it became clear that he could not read even the largest letters on the chart. During refraction, trial lenses were gently placed before his eyes and adjusted one by one until, suddenly, the letters came into sharp focus. He had uncorrected myopia and received his first pair of glasses the following week.

The change was immediate and transformative. With his new glasses, he could clearly see the blackboard for the first time, watch television without squinting, and his persistent headaches disappeared. His confidence in the classroom grew, and both his teachers and parents noticed a renewed enthusiasm for learning. Perhaps equally important, the experience educated his family about the value of routine eye examinations. They had previously believed children only needed vision checks if they complained and held the misconception that children should not wear glasses. This single screening not only restored a child's sight but reshaped a family's understanding of eye health.



## CHANGING LIVES THROUGH EARLY DETECTION

This project has clearly shown that these efforts are changing lives. Out of 495 children screened, 274 needed further evaluation, highlighting a significant unmet need. Nearly half of these cases involved astigmatism, and a similar number involved myopia, conditions that are easily treatable but often go undetected. Each screening gives a child the chance to see clearly, participate confidently in class, and avoid unnecessary learning barriers.

Beyond the numbers, the impact is deeply personal. Early identification, family education, and timely interventions empower children, parents, and teachers alike. Tenwek Hospital's work is not just about exams—it is about building a culture of eye health, strengthening classrooms, and transforming futures. The results from Kenya demonstrate that dedicated screening efforts can make a real, lasting difference in children's lives.