Current patterns of surgical services for children with congenital/developmental cataract in Tanzania
Background

• Paediatric ophthalmology recently recognized as an essential service in Africa
  – Evidence suggests that congenital/developmental cataract as the leading cause of blindness in children

• WHO recommends: 1 Child Eye Health Tertiary Facility (CEHTF) per 10 million population.
Estimates

• Estimates of (non-traumatic) childhood cataract in Africa:
  
  – Backlog: 100 children / million population

  – Incidence: 20-30 children / million population

In Tanzania we should be doing at least 20-30 children per million population per year!
Childhood cataract surgical rate (2004-5)
Childhood cataract surgical rate (2006)

Tanzania
Childhood cataract surgical rate (2007)

Tanzania
Are we reaching gender equity?

- 2004-5
- 2006
- 2008

[Pie charts showing gender equity across different years]
Recommendations from “Childhood Cataract Experts Meeting”
May, 2007 (Moshi)

• Efforts needed at the national level to address childhood cataract
• Identifying and referring children with cataract
• Surgical intervention & surgical facilities
• Decentralization of follow up services
• Linking eye care, low vision, education, and rehabilitation services
• Need external financing of cataract surgery in children