

The story of Med-Optics Vision Centre started 15 years in just one a small room. However, the company has over the years grown to seven branches spread across Kampala.

# Eye care thrives on integrity and quality

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**B**usiness is not for the faint hearted," are the profound words of businessman, Dr Dralega Anguyo, who has over the years seen Med-Optics Vision Centre grow from a small eye-care clinic to a multimillion business.

With a gleeful smile and a deep baritone, Anguyo, the co-founder and executive director of Med-Optics shares the 15-year journey that started in 2002.

In 2001, Anguyo relocated to Uganda from the UK where he had been studying a Bachelors and Masters in Optometry at Braham University in the UK.

## 2.5m

THE NUMBER OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED UGANDANS.

In 2002, the eye specialist set up an eye clinic in a small room on Buganda Road in Kampala before subsequently opening up seven other branches in different parts of Kampala.

"I used the money fetched from selling my house in UK to rent an office space and purchase optical equipment. We then started out with only three staff members, before growing



Dralega Anguyo conducts an eye checkup at one of his clinics. PHOTOS BY ALEX ESAGALA

### USEFUL INFORMATION

**Advice**

According to Anguyo, finding the need is more difficult since everyone is doing the same thing. Therefore, he says: "Find out what product can add value to that product and be able to sell it at an affordable price."

**Future plans**

Anguyo envisions a steadily growing business that has the potential to spread throughout Africa and beyond. "We want to cover all areas of Uganda then move to East African. Our stock gap is at least a branch of Med-optics in all the African major cities. Once we cover Africa we may consider going international," he says.

to more than 40 employees," Anguyo narrates, reminiscing the time when he used to be the glass fixer, accountant and conducting the checks.

The business was co-founded together with his wife Audrey Dralega an educationist.

Patrick Kintu is the Med-optics chief executive officer and together with the team, he says: "We have set ambitious targets for the next five years" with no option but to achieve them.

According to Anguyo, there is great need for specialised eye care because the current 40 per cent out of a population of 40 million is too low.

"... I realised there was a gap in eye health. For this reason we formed an optometrist Association of Uganda, through which we lobbied Makerere University to start a school of Optometrists with funds from various partners," he says.

Through Med-optics, Anguyo has played a part to improve eye sight among Ugandans. It is estimated that more than 144,000 Ugandans are totally blind while 2.5 million are visually impaired.

However, this has not been without challenges as the clinic continues to face challenges of financing and staffing since there are few specialists on the market yet those available "do not take work serious in addition to asking for huge salaries".

Beyond the challenges of staffing is the high tax regime that is instituted on eye care equipment thus making them unaffordable to the ordinary

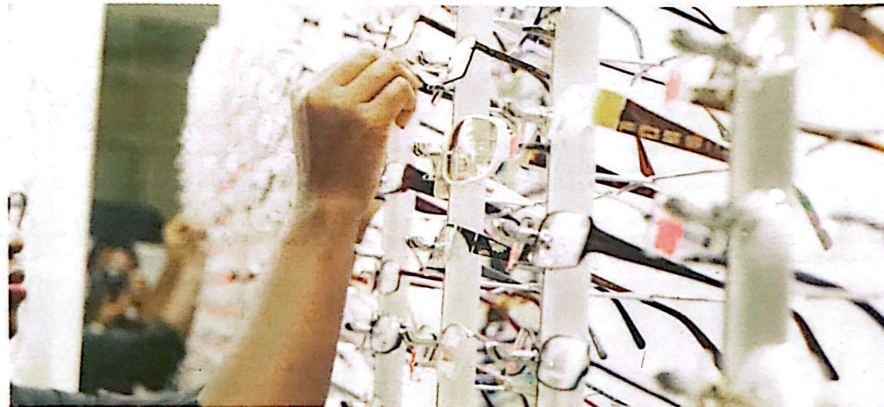
### IMPORTANT

**Guiding principles:**

"According to Anguyo, there are basically three guiding principles that have enabled Med-optics to excel where others have failed.

Anguyo is a firm believer in integrity, delivering quality and financial discipline. The three have been the guide book as well as ensuring strict observance of ethics.

"From day one, I separated my finances from those of the company. I pay myself a salary. I also endeavor to employ good and competent staff who are hardworking," he says.



A customer checks through the frames section at one of the Med-optics clinics.