

## **Blindness and visual impairment in a region endemic for onchocerciasis in the Central African Republic**

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### **Abstract:**

**AIMS:** A population based survey of blindness and visual impairment was conducted in the district of Bossangoa, Central African Republic. **METHODS:** A total of 48 communities were randomly selected, and 6086 people examined. **RESULTS:** The prevalence of blindness (visual acuity in the better eye less than 3/60) was 2.2%, and visual impairment 3.0% (6/24 to 3/60 in the better eye). The major causes of blindness were onchocerciasis (73.1%), cataract (16.4%), trachoma (4.5%), and glaucoma (2.2%). **CONCLUSION:** Around 95.5% of all blindness could potentially have been prevented or treated. Ivermectin mass distribution is hoped to prevent 50% of all forms of visual loss in the future