

# Iganzo Dispensary

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MAZARA EDWARD MATUCHA

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Iganzo Dispensary is situated in the Loleza Mountains of the Mbeya Region of Tanzania.<sup>1</sup> Located at an altitude of 5,500 feet above sea level, it is one of the oldest and most important dispensaries in Tanzania. It provides the most basic primary healthcare services to rural communities including childhood immunizations, family planning, wound dressing, and the management of common ailments like colds, diarrhea, typhoid, and simple malaria.<sup>2</sup>

## Founding of the Dispensary

When Seventh-day Adventist missionaries arrived in the region, they had many challenges among which was lack of health facilities. Typhoid and dysentery were endemic. The people had a local government under the chief or *mwene* (in the Safwa language) who was believed to be a divine leader. The people would go to shrines in the mountains to worship their ancestors and seek healing. The missionaries started a small medical facility within the Iganzo Mission center to help in the delivery of children and their vaccination. However, this medical facility did not start its official operation until 1963 under Dr. Robert Mziba who supervised it for eight years. People from Mbeya, Iringa, and as far away as Sumbawanga would queue for its services. Mziba became a hero saving the lives of hundreds. As a result, many people decided to join the church.<sup>3</sup>

## The Impact of the Dispensary on the Community

David Mwakyusa, former minister of health in Tanzania, shared a testimony that summarizes the impact of the Iganzo Dispensary in the local community. When he was a student at Masoko in Tukuyu and became seriously sick, he was rushed to Iganzo, which was the only dispensary in Mbeya at the time. He was admitted, but put in one of the rooms in Mziba's house. The compassion and true love he experienced led him to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church upon his recovery.<sup>4</sup>

## Dispensary Directors

Robert Mziba (1963-1971), Mr. Mwakamogo (1972), Samuel Mboje (also known as Bugola Bululu) (1973-1975), Chacha Bina (1975-1978), Temihanga (1978-1980), Daidoni Kayandabila (1981-1990), Alex (1991-1993), Dola<sup>5</sup> (1993-1995), Watson Mwaibasa (1997-2012), Crephod Majani (2012-2014), Enock Mwakalindile (2014-2015),

Philimon Msihili (2015-2016), Enock Hussein Bumbuli (2017-present).

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## SOURCES

*Seventh-day Adventist Online Yearbook*. Accessed May 3, 2020. <https://www.adventistyearbook.org/>.

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## NOTES

1. *Seventh-day Adventist Online Yearbook*, "Iganzo Adventist Dispensary," accessed May 3, 2020, <https://www.adventistyearbook.org/entity?EntityID=42577&highlight=iganzo>.
2. Personal knowledge of the author.
3. E. Kangaru, telephone interview with the author, February 28, 2020.
4. Professor Mwakyusa's testimony. He served as Minister of Health of Tanzania, 1990-1995.
5. Dola was not a Seventh-day Adventist. During his leadership, poor financial management and irregularities led to the termination of employees and closure of the dispensary for two years.

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