



ERADICATING PREVENTABLE AND CURABLE BLINDNESS

Best of 2010

PHOTO: Ace Krale

HIMALAYAN CATARACT PROJECT

NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN NEPAL



Corneas being donated prior to cremation in Kathmandu.

Eyebanking Strengthened

HCP, Tilganga Institute of Ophthalmology, and SightLife signed a memorandum of understanding outlining a 5-year project to strengthen eye banking in Nepal. HCP Board Member Dr. Matt Oliva, who also serves as Associate Medical Director to SightLife, is enthusiastic about the partnership: *"SightLife has a great track record eradicating cornea blindness in India and has the ability to expand that model in Nepal where there are well-trained cornea doctors, but a lack of access to tissue."*

New USAID Grant to Include Renewable Energy at Tilganga

In October, USAID-ASHA and HCP signed a grant agreement (\$700,000 in USAID support on a \$982,000 total project budget) to further the ongoing development of Tilganga. The agreement includes support for continued procurement of advanced surgical equipment, provision of resources to support ongoing modernization of Tilganga's management systems, and a renewable energy project utilizing cutting edge US solar technology.



Since 2003, USAID-ASHA has been an indispensable partner in the Tilganga expansion, committing \$4,600,000 in support.

Refractive Surgery Update

HCP has partnered with USAID-ASHA, Tilganga, and the London Vision Clinic Foundation (LVCF) to develop the **Refractive Surgical Unit (RSU)** at Tilganga. The RSU will provide cutting edge surgical services, generate revenues to support the hospital's running costs and further humanitarian care. Tilganga's Dr. Kishore Pradhan and Mr. Gopal Karmacharya recently completed initial training in refractive surgery and technical support, respectively. Design for renovations of Tilganga's original operating clinic are underway, and the project is expected to be completed in the coming year.



TILGANGA DIRECT CARE

January – October 2010:

PATIENTS SCREENED = 222,220 • # OF SURGERIES = 16,304

HIMALAYAS

Training

China

Tilganga and HCP have been collaborating with the Qinghai Tibetan Research Centre over the last five years to support construction of its new eye center in Xining, China. The inauguration of Qinghai Cataract Treatment Centre was attended by Dr. Ruit in August 2010.

In September, Dr. Geoff Tabin and HCP Medical Advisor Dr. David Chang visited Project Vision facilities in southern China. Project Vision is an NGO operating 16 charity eye centers in 5 provinces. Over 50,000 cataract surgeries have been performed and 100,000 cases are projected by the end of 2011.



Dr. Tabin and Dr. Chang performing live surgery in southern China, September, 2010.

"I am very impressed by what [Project Vision Director] Dennis Lam is accomplishing. They have an excellent training and skill transfer method and superb follow-up and documentation of results. There is quite a bit that we can take from their program and it could be a great partnership for improving the quality in our efforts in both Lhasa and Xining."

—Geoff Tabin

Bhutan

HCP marked its 10th anniversary with the **Royal Government of Bhutan** by signing a third partnership agreement in September. Since 2000, HCP has supported the training of surgical teams that have provided more than 378,038 patient screenings and over 7,708 sight-restoring eye surgeries. Over the next four years, HCP will continue to emphasize sub-specialty training. HCP has trained Bhutanese sub-specialists in Pediatrics, Cornea and Vitreo-Retina — all firsts for the country. Co-Directors Geoff Tabin and Sanduk Ruit both visited in 2010 to follow up with trainees and provide direct care.

India

In 2010, HCP continued working in the poorest reaches of Uttar Pradesh (UP) to train ophthalmologists in modern cataract surgery, through the Kripalu Charity Hospitals in Mangarh and Barsana. The project provides opportunity for increased high-volume, high-quality cataract skills transfer experiences for local UP eye care providers, doctors and Tilganga residents. Amongst both facilities, over 6,500 patients have been screened and 1,250 free cataract surgeries provided since 2007.

In mountainous Sikkim, the Jomgon Kongtrol Eye Centre in Kalimpong continued providing quality care in 2010, with 15,122 screenings and 877 cataract surgeries.

Training local providers has the greatest multiplier effect on eradicating preventable blindness.

"The biggest obstacle in providing high-quality residency education in the developing world is lack of teachers. We need to focus a significant amount of resources to improve infrastructure and entice more residents who demonstrate sincere interest in the residency program. Cultivating this interest is the key to improving ophthalmic education in the developing world."

— **Dr. Mike Feilmeier**
HCP International Fellow

"I am extremely thankful for the Himalayan Cataract Project to give me this golden opportunity to visit Boston and Utah, USA and learn about corneal pathologies and the updated management which will be useful in the day-to-day care of the patients in my country."

— **Dr. Nor Tshering**
HCP Fellow and Bhutan's first corneal specialist

Training Highlights

28

INTERNATIONAL FELLOWS
TRAINED AT TILGANGA

8

INTERNATIONAL FELLOWS
TRAINED AT JOHN A.
MORAN EYE CENTER

30
weeks

VOLUNTEER FACULTY
INTERNATIONAL
EXCHANGES

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Ghana PATIENTS SCREENED = 19,113 • # OF SURGERIES = 1,027

In 2010 our HCP International Fellow spent six weeks at Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital restructuring the MD Ophthalmology training program (see Training sidebar). Our USAID-supported KATH Eye Surgery training facility is scheduled for completion in mid-2011. HCP has requested additional support from USAID-ASHA to equip the new facility. Dr. Tabin worked with local ophthalmologists Dr. Seth Larrey and Dr. Seth Wanye in Tamale, providing over 177 cataract surgeries in an outreach micro-surgical eye clinic in April. Dr. Larrey and Dr. Peter Armah from KATH are pursuing subspecialty training in cornea and oculoplastics at Moran Eye Center.



Construction of new surgical facility at KATH.



"I am pleased because not only will the centre help expand the provision of specialist eye care services to the people of this region and indeed the northern half of Ghana but it will also boost training for the critically needed eye care professionals required to reduce avoidable blindness."

—Ghanaian Deputy Minister of Health, Robert Joseph Mettle-Nunoo

Ethiopia PATIENTS SCREENED = 20,246 • # OF SURGERIES = 8,321

HCP is working with the Quiha Zonal Hospital in Mekelle, supporting high-volume outreach programs, training for ophthalmic assistants and equipment

support for the new hospital. HCP supported three Ethiopian trainees at Tilganga in SICs, and Dr. Yewubesh was featured on a television program produced by *National Geographic Poland* featuring women around the world helping other women.

The filming took place



Dr. Matt Oliva and HCP Fellow Dr. Tilahun Kiros examine a patient.

during a high-volume cataract workshop at Quiha during which 950 cataract surgeries were performed in three days.

Rwanda

HCP is working with HCP Fellow Dr. John Nkurikiye to establish the Rwandan International Institute of Ophthalmology (RIIO) in Kigali that will serve as a center of excellence for training. Dr. Tabin made a follow-up visit to work with Dr. Nkurikiye to improve cornea care in Rwanda. Throughout the year, Dr. Nkurikiye has also managed high-volume cataract programs modeled after the system at Tilganga.

Malawi

In June, HCP Board Member Dr. Matt Oliva managed an eye care intervention in Mwandama, Malawi, in collaboration with



the Millennium Villages Project and the Lions

Sight First Eye Hospital in Blantyre. In total, 1,000 pairs of glasses were distributed, 115 sight-restoring cataract surgeries performed, and 70 village health care workers were trained in basic eye care.

Nigeria

Four Nigerians attended small incision cataract surgery training at Tilganga in 2010. In December, Dr. Geoff Tabin will return to Nigeria, participating in a cataract workshop in Zaria providing followup training and cataract surgery to approximately 300 patients and working with local providers.

Nigerians Dr. Balogun and Nurse Lamidi during their fellowship at Tilganga in June.





PHOTO: Margaret Laws

Happy patients, Tamale, Ghana.



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CURABLE BLINDNESS

The Himalayan Cataract Project is at the forefront of international organizations working towards the eradication of preventable and treatable blindness through high-quality ophthalmic care, education and the establishment of a world-class eye care infrastructure.

e-news

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PO Box 55, Waterbury, VT 05676 USA
Tel: 802-522-9976
Fax: 802-649-1041
Email: info@cureblindness.org
www.cureblindness.org



HCP Media Highlights

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Out of the Darkness Selected to Be Screened at International Film Festival:

Out of the Darkness is an independent documentary that features Co-Directors Drs. Sanduk Ruit and Geoff Tabin trekking to a remote eye camp in Nepal. The Documentary Edge Film Festival in New Zealand has just selected the film to be one of the

50 screened at their festival in early 2011. The beautiful trailer is now available online and will be submitted to additional international film festivals in the coming year.

LINK: <http://www.outofthedarkness-film.com/>

Advanced Press on *See How They Shine* by David Oliver Relin:

There are similarities between *Three Cups of Tea* and *See How They Shine*. Like Mortenson, what Tabin and Ruit are doing is improving people's lives through a common-sense, low-cost approach that empowers local people. A major part of the Himalayan Cataract Project involves training others to perform the surgery, and the work is done in places where people don't have access to regular medical care." — Jeff Baker of the *Oregonian*

2011 'Night for Sight'

Consider joining us for our third "Night for Sight" event on February 26th, 2011 at the Snowbird Renaissance Center. In 2010, the event raised over \$145,000 to support blindness alleviation efforts in the developing world.