UNITE FOR SIGHT
EVENT

STANFORD UNIVERSITY
CALIFORNIA, USA
NOVEMBER 3, 2008
“HEALTH IN AFRICA: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE ONLY OPHTHALMOLOGIST FOR 2 MILLION PEOPLE IN NORTHERN REGION GHANA

PRESENTATION BY
SETH WANYE, MD
GHANA

- Area: 238,537 sq km
- Population: 22 M+
- Capital: ACCRA
- Languages: Eng, Akan (Twi), Dagbani, Ga, etc
GHANA

- Population: Over 22 million
- Religions: Christianity, Islam, Traditional
- Economy:
  - Agriculture – 60%
  - Industry – 15%
  - Service -- 25%
REGIONAL PROFILE

- Total land area—70.384 sq. Km
  -- 29% land area of Ghana

- Borders — East: Togo,
  -- West: La Cote D’Ivoire
  -- South: Brong Ahafo and Volta
  -- North: Upper West and Upper East

- Divisions — 20 Political and Administrative Districts
  -- 70 Health Sub-districts
POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

- Estimated population 2008– 2,186,000
- Over 5000 settlements
- Most settlements are small-200-500 people
- 54.4% settlements – less than 200 people
- Far distances between settlements
  “Overseas” area–hard to reach
  -several villages surrounded by Volta Lake
CLIMATE

- Tropical

- Temperatures: low—14 deg. night, high—38 deg.

- Rains: April -- October, peak August

- Hammamat: dry December- February
HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

- Health Institutions 136
- Teaching Hospital 1
- District Hospitals 12
- Health Centers and Clinics 123
THE NORTHERN REGIONAL EYE CARE PROGRAM

OVERALL AIM:

• To eliminate avoidable blindness by the year 2020.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Staff</th>
<th>2004</th>
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<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
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<td>Ophthalmologist</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Ophthalmic Nurses</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>Com. Based Volunteers trained in PEC</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>334 (1049 communities)</td>
<td>554 (1049 communities)</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Teachers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>250</td>
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<td>Level B staff</td>
<td>-</td>
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Blinding diseases in Ghana

- Cataract
- Glaucoma
- Trachoma and other corneal scars
- Childhood blindness & Refractive errors
- Diabetic retinopathy

80% avoidable
MAIN ACTIVITIES OF NRECP

- Community eye screening
- School eye health
- Surgery at base clinic in Tamale
- Surgical outreach to communities in all 20 districts
- Trachoma control in all 20 districts
CLINIC AT BASE HOSPITAAL

- Patient history taking
- Vision testing
- Screening for various eye diseases
- Screening for refractive errors
- Consultation, examination and treatment
- Training of local ophthalmologist
- Helping in OR
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COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- Over 26,960 screened
- 10,500 glasses given out to needy clients
- Over 2,500 operable cataracts identified
- 632 Glaucoma suspects referred to clinic
- 1421 Trachoma patients referred to clinic
- UFS Student volunteers supported outreach
“When medicine becomes more expensive than food, people choose to eat”.
Cataract
ROLE OF UFS VOLUNTEERS

SURGERY AT BASE CLINIC AND OUTREACH

• Over 2,606 cataract surgeries performed
• 224 Glaucoma surgeries performed
• Volunteer ophthalmologists supported clinic and surgeries
• Student volunteers helped in OR
ROLE OF UFS VOLUNTEERS

SCHOOL OUTREACH

- Over 8,450 school children screened
- 2,450 simple corrective eyeglasses given out
- 215 complex refractive errors referred to clinic
- 54 school children had cataract surgery
- 11 children with retinoblastoma referred to clinic
- 32 eye health education sessions held
ROLE OF UFS VOLUNTEERS

- Meeting with opinion leaders
- Social involvement leads to awareness creation
- Formation of new organizations to support eye care
- Advocates for more support for eye care
- Motivation to local health workers and residents
CHALLENGES

• Social and environmental adaptation

• Lack of simple diagnostic equipment

• Financial barriers - Disorganize outreach schedule

• Combining volunteerism and tourism
THE WAY FORWARD

• Train more ophthalmic nurses and ophthalmologists
• Remove financial barrier to the uptake of surgery
• Strengthen outreach programme
• Search for more support from local and international organizations for eye care
GRATITUDE

• UNITE FOR SIGHT
  Jennifer Staple
  Julie Harris
  Patrick
  Joyce Ho
  Kathleen
  Elizabeth Wei

• JJ SH FAMILY FOUNDATION

• ALL OTHER VOLUNTEERS
THANK YOU

GOD BLESS YOU ALL