

NEW SIGHT

A
NEW
VISION

DECEMBER | 2014

Restoring Sight | Renewing Lives

NORTH
SUMATRA
OUTREACH
2014

THE POWER
OF A GIFT.
THE GIFT OF
SIGHT

CHILDHOOD
BLINDNESS
CAN BE
REVERSED!

Dear Supporters,

2014 has been an eventful year, a year in which we have been doing a lot of planning and preparation.

Three cataract surgical outreaches are expected to take place during the first half of 2015 in East Java and West Kalimantan.

Our permanent community eye health services in East Java and Nias Islands are now in place, with Dr. Teguh F. Metaputra, Dr. Yoice Claudine and Sister Klara giving free eye treatment to disadvantaged patients two to three times a week, including cataract surgeries. Read more about them in Page 3. Similar programs are being planned for Papua and Padang Sidempuan, to be led by Dr. Yanuar Ali and Dr. M. Irsan respectively.

We would not have been here today without the continued support from generous people like you. Special credit to Annebel Yu, our young donor who ran her first full marathon on Dec 7, raising funds for our patients; and the team of Singapore elite cyclists are back on their saddles again, launching *Melaka & Back in One Crack*: a quest to ride 500+kms in less than 24 hours, to benefit *A New Vision*." Please give generously at www.giveforward.com/ride-for-sight.

Don't miss the Aljazeera Documentary on Dr. Ruit and *A New Vision's* work in Nepal and Nias Islands. Google "Aljazeera Gift of Sight" on YouTube for an emotional 26 minutes documentary.

I look forward to giving you another update in 2015.

Wishing you a delightful year-end celebration and a warm welcome to 2015.

From all of us at *A New Vision*

NORTH SUMATRA OUTREACH 2014



Novisaputri (10 years old) was her blind grandma's caretaker. Now that grandma's vision has healed, she can focus on her study and has time to play with other children.

THE POWER OF A GIFT. THE GIFT OF SIGHT →

Having completed three cataract surgical outreaches in North Sumatra (December 2010, June 2011 and November 2012), we decided to stretch ourselves to include Nias Island in this year's North Sumatra itinerary. Nias Island is situated off the western shore of the main Sumatera Island, and has a population of 800,000. The island made international news when two major natural disasters (tsunami in 2004 and earthquake in 2005) destroyed the island one after another and took thousands of lives.

Most residents of Nias Island earn their living selling rubber sap collected from the trees they own. Having little or no capital and no basic knowledge, they use the old method of collecting rubber sap using coconut cups, which makes the sap dirty, therefore low in value. Currently, the selling price they earn from collecting the sap is US\$ 0.4 per kilogram. Compare this to the price of rice that costs US\$ 0.8. per kilogram. Not surprisingly, majority of the island's residents live below the poverty line.

Cataracts do not discriminate; rich, poor, female, male, young and old are all susceptible. But poverty changes cataracts from a fixable issue, to a one that changes lives and causes cataract blindness. *A New Vision's* (ANV) plan for Nias Island was to perform 500 free of charge sight restoring cataract surgeries. This proved to be a tall order!

Public transport in Nias Island is scarce and the local government has limited vehicles to spare, making patient mobilization difficult. The road condition is too poor for bus, so we rented vans, each carried 11 passengers, making it both inefficient and an extremely costly means to transport people. Combined with poor road conditions, the smallest distance required enormous effort.

Added to that were the regularly power outages, which occurred daily and for what seemed to be every few hours. Our sterilizer and several microscope bulbs were ruined from the constant power interruptions. Our surgeons had to complete surgeries under torchlights.

To top the list of issues we faced, the clinic where our outreach was scheduled to take place in South Nias wasn't ready for us when we arrived, despite official letters having been sent in advance and numerous phone calls. There was even an event banner hanging outside the clinic with the dates clearly written on it! In the end, 459 surgeries were completed, just short of our 500 target.

Despite the delays, we had to move the team to our next destination, Padang Sidempuan.





Siti Holijah (75 years old) on the back of her son at Padang Sidempuan hospital. It was not uncommon that some patients have other physical disabilities besides cataracts, which make their conditions even tougher.

TAPANULI/PADANG SIDEMPUAN MEDAN



When we contacted the military regiment in Padang Sidempuan for help to spread the news and bring patients for our upcoming outreach (our 3rd time there), we were told not to worry. □ A New Vision outreach is already famous, many patients are waiting for you. □ Indeed, 800 people turned up for the one day screening session!

ANV adopts a unique approach in reaching our potential patients. Our medical and administration volunteers use a rented mini-van to travel from town to town to reach the communities waiting for eye screening. Our mobile screening procedure is no different than what is performed in a first class hospital.

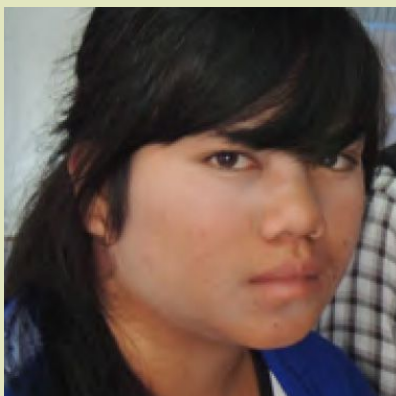
Each patient goes through a visual acuity test and a close examination by doctors or trained paramedics. Each patient receives counseling on their eye condition and we ensure they understand fully the diagnosis and prognosis and options available. Those who qualify for cataract

surgery are further tested for their blood pressure and blood sugar level. Free medication is distributed if required. Those who suffer from other eye diseases are advised where they can seek treatment and we'll also give them a small quantity of medicine for temporary relief.

There are only 3 to 4 ANV volunteers in these mobile screening trips. Additional volunteers from G-Resources Martabe Gold Mine (our local donor for the 3rd year in a row) also assisted and were greatly appreciated. Together, we managed to screen all 800 patients in one day!

Three weeks later, ANV returned to Padang Sidempuan to perform the cataract surgeries. A total of 603 sight-restoring surgeries were successfully completed over three days, performed by four doctors. All of these doctors are Indonesian who had been trained under Dr. Ruit at Tilganga Institute of Ophthalmology □ Nepal. Their cataract surgical skills are now considered amongst the best in the country.

SCREENING AT MT. SINABUNG EVACUATION CAMPS



Megawati Br. Tarigan, a 16-year-old girl from Mt. Sinabung

MT SINABUNG'S eruption in late 2013 resulted in over 15,000 people to lose their homes. Those displaced have taken refuge in makeshift camps across in nearby regencies. On 5th and 6th April 2014, A New Vision visited nine of those camps, providing eye checks and screened 3,578 people for cataracts. 178 people screened were found to suffer from cataract blindness. These patients were scheduled for ANV Medan outreach in June 2014.

We also met Megawati Br. Tarigan, a 16 year girl from Mt. Sinabung (*left*) who has been blind since childhood and needs cornea transplants for her both eyes

We are currently raising funds for Megawati (USD\$10,000) which will be used to fund the travel to Indonesia for the cornea transplant specialist surgeon from Tilganga, operational expenses and importantly the costly post-op care needed. Such a transplant will give Megawati her sight back to 20-20 strength.

MEDAN



North Sumatra ANV mobile screening team traveled for 24 days on the road, covering 24 towns and screening 3,892 people. Cataract blind patients from this screening exercise were operated in Nias, Padang Sidempuan and Medan. A total of 1,799 surgeries were successfully performed.

NIAS ISLAND

COMMUNITY EDUCATION ON BASIC EYE HEALTH

- 21 – 25 April 2014
- At Gunung Sitoli, Lotu, Mandrehe, Telok Dalam, Gomo
- 238 village nurses, health district staff, village chiefs trained

EYEHEALTH AND CATARACT SCREENING

- 21 – 25 April, 17 – 28 May 2014
- At Gunung Sitoli, Lotu, Mandrehe, Telok Dalam, Gomo, Lahusa, Lolomatua, Lolowau, Tuhemberua, Amandraya, Lahewa, Soliga, Namohalu
- 1,176 people were screened for eye diseases

SURGERY AND POST-OP MONITORING

- Gunung Sitoli Public Hospital (22 April 24 April 2014), Teluk Dalam Community Health Center (26 □ 28 April 2014)
- 459 sight-restoring cataract surgeries performed

PADANG SIDEMPUAN

COMMUNITY EDUCATION ON BASIC EYE HEALTH

- 28 – 30 April 2014
- Padang Sidempuan, Tarutung, Batang Toru, Sibolga
- 649 village nurses, village chiefs, village based army personnel trained

ANV NORTH SUMATERA TRAVEL JOURNAL

| 24 DAYS | 24 TOWNS | 3,892 PEOPLE | 1,799 SURGERIES PERFORMED

EYEHEALTH AND CATARACT SCREENING

- 18 – 20 May 2014, 1 □ 5 June 2014
- At Sibolga, Tarutung, Padang Sidempuan
- 1,630 people were screened for eye diseases

SURGERY AND POST-OP MONITORING

- 1 – 5 June 2014
- Padang Sidempuan Army Hospital
- 603 sight-restoring cataract surgeries performed

MEDAN

COMMUNITY EDUCATION ON BASIC EYE HEALTH

- 5 -6 April 2014 at Mt Sinabung Evacuation Camp
- 4 – 6, 16 – 17 May, 7 □ 11 June 2014
- At Asahan, Tanjung Balai, Aek Kanopan, Labuhan Batu, Sergai, Siantar, Sidikalang, Medan
- 1,086 people were screened for eye diseases

SURGERY AND POST-OP MONITORING

- 7 – 11 June 2014
- Puteri Hijau Army Hospital, Medan
- 737 sight-restoring cataract surgeries performed



COMMITMENT TO NIAS PEOPLE

ANV waited for over one year, for Nias Island's one and only ophthalmologist to graduate. As soon as she did, we contacted Dr. Yoice Claudine and offered our support; which included one-month of intensive training, focusing on Small Incision Cataract Surgery (SICS) under the tutelage of Dr. Ruit in Nepal. Two of Dr. Yoice's paramedics also joined her for training there.

During our visit to Nias, we met Sister Klara Duha who owns and runs a charity maternity clinic and an orphanage there. Sister Klara was excited to be part of the process to restore sight to the poor. As such, ANV, Sister Klara and Dr. Yoice formed a tripartite partnership where Sister Klara dedicates a section of her property for a community eye clinic, enabling Dr. Yoice to practice, ANV funds the required ophthalmic equipment, consumables, lenses, screening logistics and other operational expenses.

Sister Klara has since been conducting regular screenings in remote parts of Nias. In the first two weeks, Dr. Yoice had already performed 25 cataract surgeries from the clinic. Nias people no longer have to wait for an outreach to receive eye care.



WORK CONTINUES IN JAVA

In May 2013, ANV made ophthalmic history in conducting the nation's largest community cataract outreach at one staging in Malang, East Java. A total of 1,886 operations were completed in the span of eight days. Motivated by the extremely large number of people with cataracts in the region, ANV formed partnership with Dr. Teguh Metaputra to commence a long-term solution for the region's urgent eye care needs.

ANV supported the training of Dr. Teguh in Tilganga (Nepal) and Aravind (India); as well as training for his paramedics. We also supplied required equipment, consumables and other operating needs.

Dr. Teguh is a young, committed and extremely talented eye surgeon. Unfortunately, he does not have a clinic where he can give community services on a permanent basis. He is currently operating on an ad-hoc basis from a hospital in

Gresik (25 km from Surabaya) We are trying to raise USD 250,000 to build an eye clinic, so Dr. Teguh can carry out the work he and ANV are so passionate about helping the poor see again.



Isra Hotningsih Saragih 12 years old, awaiting surgery on her left eye.

CHILDHOOD BLINDNESS

19 children under the age of 12 years old received cataract removal surgeries at ANV May-June 2014 Outreach. Cataract blindness in children can be reversed if they are treated in time. Abandoned cases lead to permanent blindness. As a result, these children have to spend the rest of their lives, which could be 50-70 years, in darkness. A needless tragedy for a condition which could have been treated in under 10 minutes and costs USD 100.



USD\$100

Per treatment per person



KRISDON



We first met Krisdon when he was a 6 year old boy at an ANV screening event in Sibolga, in May 2011. He was with his brother, Rinaldi who was also blind from congenital cataracts. Rinaldi was successfully operated on in an ANV outreach in June 2011, but Krisdon then disappeared before his turn. Their father did not want to spend another day at the hospital, rushing home so he could work to earn a living. We were very despaired and asked around for Krisdon, but no one knew where they live.

This year, Krisdon came to our screening in Sibolga. Our sharp-eyed volunteer, Elwi recalled this boy immediately. Whilst his brother, Rinaldi now goes to school, Krisdon grows to be a sullen and irritable child, frustrated by his inability to see. His irritability made surgery without general anesthesia impossible. This means his surgery has to be done at Putri Hijau Hospital in Medan where general anesthesia can be performed safely. The family could not afford the fare to Medan from Sibolga. The solution was Krisdon, his mother and grandfather hopped on ANV's chartered bus when Padang Sidempuan outreach was completed and headed to Medan together with the ANV team

NEFI & AGUS



The road in Mandrehe, on the way to Gulo's home.



Nefi and Agus and their father, Pak Gulo, outside their house in Mandrehe.



Agus and Nefi after the surgery. The complete life-transforming footage of the two siblings can be seen on Aljazeera: 101 East Gift of Sight. The photo is a still-shot from the video.

Mandrehe is a small town in western Nias. Houses are sparse and intercepted by thick forest. Residential areas are connected by dirt road surfaced with sharp-edged stones.

Pak Gulo came to our screening held at a primary health care clinic there. He brought two of his children who were blind. Nefi Darmawati (10 year old

girl in red shirt) and Agus Salim (8 year old boy in yellow shirt). The Gulo family lives in a small wooden house with the grandmother and their extended family. Unlike their siblings and cousins of similar age, Nefi and Agus are extremely quiet, shy and withdrawn. Their inability to see has inhibited their physical and mental growth. For children their age, Agus and Nefi have smaller built. Malnutrition is common

among blind children. Agus and Nefi could not read and spoke very few words. They couldn't play marbles or hop scotch. When Theresia asked what they would like to be in future, the kids were silent. Blindness has robbed their ability to dream. A day after their cataract surgeries, Nefi and Agus were seen chasing a ball down the foot path (picture in the middle).

SPECIAL THANKS

to G-Resources Martabe, Allergan International Foundation and The Fred Hollows Foundation who have been supporting ANV from the beginning, to Mattell Indonesia who supplied toys for our children patients and to Macehat Caf   Medan who adopted us as their Charity of the Month. Our heartfelt gratitude to all donors, Annebel Yu, friends and supporters from Singapore, Australia, USA and Indonesia whom we can't name each and everyone. You know who you are and the amazing contributions you have made to change people's lives!

**PLEASE KEEP THIS WORK ALIVE,
PLEASE KEEP CHANGING LIVES.**

PHOTOS

ANV team, G-Resources Communications Team, Lee Siew Yian, Surachet C, Ripun Dahal

CONTENT

ANV team

LAYOUT

Sampan.Co

RESTORING SIGHT/ RENEWING LIVES

