

A
NEW
VISION

A New Vision

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Photo by: Alland Dharmawan

Laughs aplenty – a day post surgery, patients' eyes were checked and their visual acuity tested. Patients welcomed the brighter day with smiles. The photo was taken at Dr Soepraoen Hospital, East Java, Indonesia.

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East Java Outreach

CATARACT INFORMATION WEEK 4 - 9 March 2013	EYE CHECK & CATARACT SCREENING 15 - 23 April 2013	HIGH VOLUME CATARACT SURGERY 10 - 16 May 2013	CATARACT SURGICAL OUTCOME MONITORING 11 - 17 June 2013
A team of volunteers toured 11 towns to educate and raise awareness on curable blindness, specifically cataracts. The event was attended by 2,611 village based petty officers, community health care workers and volunteers.	A team of volunteers screened the eyes of 3,816 people who have visual difficulties who came to our screening posts in 11 towns. 1,636 of them (42.87%) were suffering from cataracts blindness. Other prevalent eye problems noted were glaucoma, pterygium and corneal scar.	A team of operators, paramedics, and volunteers served 1,568 patients and completed a record number of 1,836 surgeries in 7 days. This is the largest outreach recorded in Indonesia in one single event. In addition, every patient's eye was measured for correct lens power, ensuring no shortcut on quality.	A team of volunteers travelled to 6 towns to check the outcome of the cataract surgeries. 1,265 patients (80%) attended. Their corrected visual acuity proves that high quality cataract surgery is possible even for extremely high volume cataract surgical outreach.



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South Kalimantan Outreach

EYE CHECK & CATARACT SCREENING 28 - 31 August 2013	HIGH VOLUME CATARACT SURGERY 2 - 6 September 2013	CATARACT SURGICAL OUTCOME MONITORING 9 - 10 October 2013
A team of volunteers went on the road again, this time to 3 towns in South Kalimantan to give free vision screening. A total of 2,600 people with visual problems came to the 3 screening posts. 1,023 of them (39.34%) were confirmed to be suffering from cataract blindness.	880 sight restoration surgeries were performed in 4 days. However, out of the 1,023 patients qualified from screening, almost 300 patients could not be operated this time as they were suffering from hypertension and high blood glucose levels. We gave them medication and dietary advice. These patients are rescheduled for surgery at our next outreach event in the area.	A team of volunteers will check the results of the cataract surgeries in 4 towns operated in September 2013.

A New Vision in East Java

East Java is one of the most populous provinces in Indonesia with an estimated population of 34.8 million people living on 47,800 square km of land area. It also has one of the highest numbers of poor population in the country.

A New Vision (ANV) team set sail to East Java in February 2013 with an ambitious goal: to hold, for the first time, a high volume cataract surgery, free of charge, for the poor in East Java.

The event started with a basic eye health education week in March 2013, for petty village officers (babinsa – Bintara Pembina desa), community healthcare workers and volunteers. The education week aimed to establish awareness and equipped these community figures with basic knowledge on eye health and curable blindness, specifically cataract blindness, the purpose being so they can actively take part in eradicating blindness in their communities by giving correct advice and refer to patients to seek treatment.

The large-scale education week or "Cataract Information Week" successfully

held at 11 regency towns around the province in 5 days and drew 2,611 attendees.

A month later, ANV team returned with a medical team and visited 9 regency towns to hold mass eye check/ataract screening. The benefit of the education week was clearly demonstrated. A staggering number of cataract patients were found among the 3,000 patients who came to ANV screening posts, referred to by trainees from cataract education week. Early identification of cataracts is the first critical step in solving the problem of high percentage of people who are needlessly blind.

These patients were operated at ANV's high volume cataract surgery project at Dr Soepraoen Hospital, East Java. A team of experienced ophthalmologists and their assistants worked tirelessly around the clock. The volunteers kept up with the pace and worked hard at their posts. Their admirable dedication, commitment and discipline made 300 surgeries a day possible. By the end of the week, a total record number of 1,836 surgeries in 7 days. Together we have



On average, 250 sight restoration surgeries were done per day, in the ANV East Java outreach.



Photo by Alland Dharmawan

A patient tested his own vision by waving his hands in front of his eyes, in pleasant disbelief, a day after his sight restoration surgery.

made a history.

It is not just output (number of surgeries) that matters, outcome (quality of surgeries) matters more. In June 2013, ANV team made another round of check on operated patients. We hit the road again and saw our patients in 6 different regency towns in East Java. How light hearted the mood was. It was a visibly different situation from cataract screening days. The cataract-free eyes eagerly and actively looked around, observing the surrounding environment and beyond.

Building local capacity is key to sustaining efforts in eradicating avoidable blindness. Prior to the surgery in East Java, Dr. Sanduk Ruit of Tilganga Institute of Ophthalmology toured 4 universities across Java, giving lectures and live demonstrations to both young and senior ophthalmologists with the aim to impart knowledge and ignite interests in community eye care.



Photo by Alland Dharmawan

Ulum Suryamodjo, an 11-year-old boy was very tense before being carried to dr.Sanduk Ruit's operating table. Our volunteer, Anna Kasman, soothed him with gentle words throughout the operation. Ulum's eyes are now cleared from cataract and he can see perfectly. A brighter future awaits you, Ulum!

A New Vision in South Kalimantan

Kalimantan is the largest island in Indonesia and is rich with natural resources (coal and forestry). However despite its natural wealth, almost 15% of the population in South Kalimantan lives below the poverty line (live with less than USD 2 a day)

ANV team was taken by surprise by the exceptionally large crowds that greeted us at every screening post in South Kalimantan. 2,600 people with visual difficulties came for cataract screenings. The team extended the hours and days of screening in order to check every eye that came.

By end of the screening session, 1,023 people (39.34%) were confirmed to suffer from cataract blindness. We also found a high percentage of corneal scar cases that are occupational-related, especially among blue-collar workers, eg. wood cutters, farmers and miners. The injuries occurred largely due to the lack of awareness thus poor practice of safety at workplace.

The high volume cataract surgery that was initially planned for 3 days was extended to four and a half days to accommodate the

higher than expected number of patients.

880 surgeries were successfully completed, thanks to the supportive and dedicated teams, from the operators to the volunteers. The camaraderie forged among the teams involved certainly has made this camp an enjoyable one.

There were, however, a high number of patients who had been screened for cataract blindness but could not be operated this time because they were suffering from hypertension and/or high blood glucose level. Needless to say, the patients were terribly disappointed. One of our core volunteers, Dr. Haryoko Wihardjo spent countless hours giving personal counseling, advising them to adopt healthier diet going forward. Free medication was also given to them. They have been rescheduled for ANV next outreach.

ANV first visit to South Kalimantan proved that there is still a lot to do. Many people are waiting for help. Our work must continue.

“Don't worry, mom's here” - Faisal (14 years old) had cataract in both eyes since he was 5 years old. His visual disabilities hindered him from attending school. His mother is unable to afford cataract surgery as it costs 9 million rupiahs (USD 900) per eye in South Kalimantan. Faisal's mother is seen here anxiously waiting by Faisal's side throughout his surgery by dr. Pinto Pulungan. We hope with his sight restored, Faisal can start schooling soon.



Photo by Virginia Vivian



Daddy's Girl – Six years old Nisa was the youngest patient at South Kalimantan outreach. Born with cataracts in both eyes, this petite girl never attended school. Socially withdrawn, she is not one to start conversation with strangers and does not respond much when asked. But beneath her quiet and shy disposition, she possesses a surprising courage. She was not afraid of having surgery. She sat quietly, waiting for her turn for surgery with her father who is a blue-collar worker at local night market earning 50,000 rupiahs (USD 5) a day. Nisa only shed tears once when the anesthesia needle pricked the skin underneath her right eye. She could see up to one meter a day after the surgery and we expect her vision to continue getting better. We look forward to seeing her again in October during the one-month post surgery follow up.

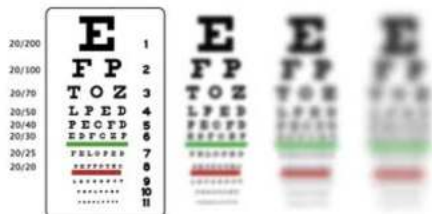


Love thy neighbor – Mdm. Latifa (left photo: lying on the left and right photo: in blue blouse) came to ANV outreach in South Kalimantan, with her neighbor, a poor elderly who lives on her own (left photo: lying on the right side). Mdm. Latifa took care of the old lady throughout the camp. Knowing the old lady was scared, Mdm. Latifa held her neighbor friend's hand, giving assurance and moral encouragement.



This page is dedicated to you, our donors and volunteers, without whom, none of this work is possible. Your dedication and commitment are inspiring. Your compassion and passion for humanity are admirable. Thank you for your kindness and your heartwarming contributions.

Kumiko Kato (left, in blue gown) volunteered in East Java outreach and continued to help by raising money and collecting used sunglasses from friends and colleagues when she was back in Singapore. Kumiko said "What I witnessed during the event was beyond my expectation - I thought I would provide some assistance however I was given so much power and was very involved. It was a truly amazing experience. I hope to be part of the team again regardless of where I am."



Special thanks to Alim Marcus, Loddy Gunadi, Kusno S. Wongsodirdjo, Mega Wijaya, Indra Putri, Hadi Widjojo, Sujthipto Gunawan, Karso P Widjojo, Irawan Chandra, Hariyanto Wiyono, Rudi Suharto, Sumpono Kangmartono and family for mobilizing volunteers and making us feel at home in East Java and South Kalimantan.

Erwin Salim lived in Melbourne for 7 years before returning back to his homeland, Indonesia last year. "The greatest moment was when I witnessed the patients' smiles after successful operations. I saw them struggling with cataracts blindness, yet in less than 24 hours, they could see the world again. It was tremendous feeling. Then it struck me that we could find happiness not only by fulfilling our needs but certainly also by helping others. Thank you ANV for the opportunity." Erwin Salim volunteered in South Kalimantan project.



Chamiatin 78 years old lady from Mojokerto, East Java, was blind on both eyes. After the surgery, she could see as far as 6/9. Seen in this picture with her village chief and a volunteer, taking visual acuity test



Age is never a barrier



Brother and sister Leonard Gunawan of Secondary 3 and Vivian Gunawan of Secondary 1 can testify. In the mornings of ANV East Java outreach, these two siblings provided cotton swabs to the patients in recovery following their operations. In the afternoon, Leonard helped doctors to give instruction to patients who were having their lens power measured. When asked about his experience volunteering Leonard testified that "when I was there, I felt that I was not just a student, but a citizen of Indonesia: Indonesia's future." *(photo and testimony courtesy of IYAC)*

A true gentleman who worked tirelessly and selflessly, Dr. Haryoko Wihardjo was involved in these two outreaches right from the start. He helped when we faced permits and logistic issues. He walked under Jakarta's hot sun for hours, delivering and collecting permit papers. Not a comfortable task for a 75 year-old man. When younger volunteers said they hope they can still volunteer at Dr. Haryoko's age, he said he wished he had started volunteering a lot earlier.

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