



Eye camp # 15 – Wajir, Northeastern Province, Kenya

Sponsored by:

Beta Charitable Trust, UK

Erach and Roshan Sadri Foundation

Crescent Pharma Limited

Introduction

The 15th CHEpS eye camp was held from 20 - 26 September 2012 at Wajir District Hospital. This is the second CHEpS eye camp to be held in Wajir, Northeastern Kenya.

Preparation

The necessary approvals were obtained, medicines and consumables procured in advance. Communities all over Wajir were informed through the local radio, mosques, local leaders and a microphone/speaker mounted on a van which traveled far and wide to ensure the neediest people were informed and not neglected. Many flocked to Wajir District Hospital to be registered by the ophthalmic clinical officer, Dr. Ahmed Aluyo. Booking and confirming the highly irregular flights were a cause of great stress. By the grace of the Almighty, this hurdle was overcome and the team managed to reach Wajir on the scheduled date.

Surgeries

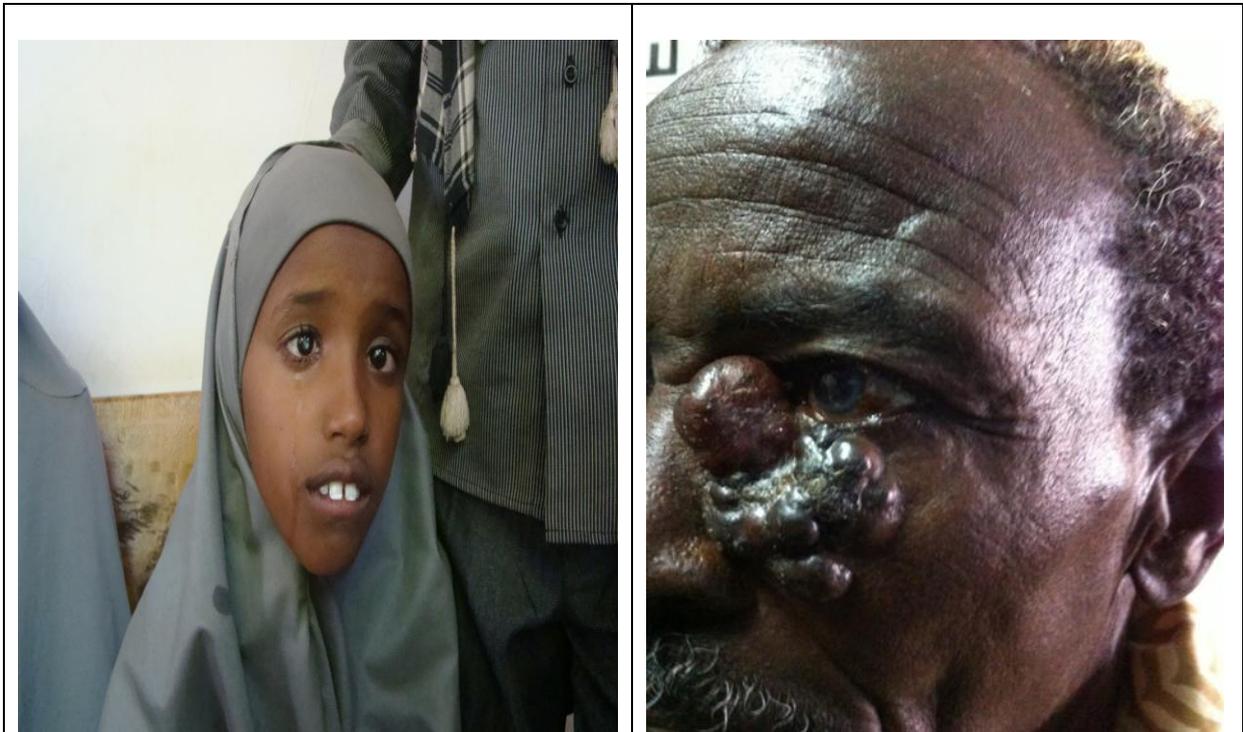
Every morning started with check-up of previous day's operated patients, counseling in care of the operated eye and demonstration in instilling eye drops for the patients and family members/friends supporting the patients. The cataract surgeries were then conducted by the eye surgeon supported by the team of eye nurses and volunteers. Daily re-screening was conducted in the evening for the next day's operation list. Dr. Ahmed Parkar carried out the first 80 surgeries over two days. This was made possible by 'conveyer belt' system whereby the surgeon would shift from one operation table to the next while the nurses ensured patients were fully prepared – counseled, approval, anesthesia, draping while on the operation table. After post-operation check-up of patients on the third day, the first surgery team returned to Nairobi and the second team took over and continued for the next three days. **A total of 142 cataract surgeries were conducted during the eye camp.** Most patients were able to see again by the time they left the hospital. Only four, who had other complications, did not regain sight.

Challenges

Distance was a big hurdle for the patients accessing the hospital. There are no tarmac roads in Wajir and very little public transport available. It's very expensive for people to travel especially for those who are visually disabled and not earning. Most of the people in the area are extremely poor. To overcome this hurdle CHEpS sent a van around to announce the eye camp and bring agreeing patients to the hospital. In one instance the van brought a group of 23 blind men and women from Hadado village, 60 kms from Wajir, to the hospital and returned them after surgery.

Special patients

Two elderly patients were seen with tumours around the eye. Biopsy was taken from one of them and sent for histopathology in Nairobi. Specialists will be approached for further treatment. A young school girl was brought with cataract after sustaining trauma. Surgery was performed but prognosis of sight recovery in such post-trauma cases is usually poor.



A child was brought in emergency due to injury to the eye causing a wound on the cornea with iris protruding from it. This is not uncommon in the area where children play in the bush. The surgeon managed to repair the corneal laceration and restore vision.



Comments

Dr. Dahir, Medical Superintendent, Wajir District Hospital:

'Maashallah. This is great! CHEpS has done a wonderful job assisting these poor patients to see again. We would like you to help in other specialist areas also.'

Dr. Ahmed Aluyo. Ophthalmic clinical officer Wajir.

'This eye camp was better than the previous one. Some complications are expected after every camp. However, this time these were much less. Most of the patients have regained their vision. CHEpS should organize the next eye camp in more distant, needy area like Bute.'

Local leaders:

Great work. Keep us informed when you plan the next one.

Patients:

'I want to read the Quran for myself again.'

'I want to go to the mosque on my own to pray. I am currently dependent on others to hold my hand and show me the way.'

'I have 15 children. I want to work and earn for them.'

'The vision regained will allow me to go to the market and work.'

'I want to be on my own again and not dependent on others.'

'The sight will help me to look after my goats.' (Most people in the region are pastoralists)

'I want to look at my grandchildren. I have never seen them due to the blindness.'

'I am young. I want to go back to school. The sight regained will help me achieve this.'

CHEpS team volunteers:

'The experience was very touching.'

'Very satisfying. '

'There are still many we need to help. They are in areas further away. '

'People had trouble getting to the eye camp due to transport issues and inability to pay fare.'

'We need to organize another eye camp in the region to reach those who missed this opportunity.'

Other community members:

'Maashallah. Very good. Keep it up. We are grateful to CHEpS for assisting us with this service.'

Acknowledgement:

The eye camp was sponsored by Beta Charitable Trust of UK, Erach and Roshan Sadri Foundation; and Crescent Pharma Limited. CHEpS is grateful to the sponsors, our local Ministry of Health partners at Wajir District Hospital (especially Dr. Dahir – Medical Superintendent, Dr. Ahmed Aluyo – ophthalmic clinical officer), the local radio station and mosques for informing the people about the services, community members and all CHEpS volunteers (Muneer Merali, Husein Omar, Shabbir Otieno, Hamza Shuriye, Dr. Ahmed Parkar, Geoffrey Likata, Sr. Ester, Sr Mary and others who worked behind the scenes) for joining hands to provide such humanitarian activities. We are grateful to Mr. Elmi, MP Wajir, who went out of his way and assisted in ensuring flight for the team. Without this assistance the CHEpS team may not have been able to go to Wajir. Special thanks are due to Dr. Ahmed Parkar and Al-Gadhir Clinic for allowing use of their operating microscope and instruments for the eye camp.



Wajir District Hospital, Eye Camp Team



Instilling eye drops before surgery



Dr.Parkar examining a patient



Surgeon Likata anesthetizes patient's eye





2 surgeons operating same time





One of the distant villages

Patients ferried from distant villages for operations

MINISTRY OF HEALTH
HADADO HEALTH CENTRE

SERVICE CHARTER

SERVICES OFFERED	REQUIREMENTS	TIME	COST
1. INPATIENT CARE	CARDS	5-20 MIN	20KSH
2. CONSULTATIONS	CARDS	5-20 MIN	30 KSH
3. SURGICAL	CARDS	5-20 MIN	20KSH
4. CHILD SURGERY	CARDS	5-20 MIN	50-100 KSH
5. IMMUNIZATION	CHILD HEALTH CARD	5-20 MIN	FREE
6. ANC	ANC CARDS	5-20 MIN	FREE
7. FAMILY PLANNING	FPB CARDS	5-20 MIN	FREE
8. POST ABORTION CARE	CARDS	5-20 MIN	50-100 KSH
9. SWITZING DRESSING	CARDS	5-20 MIN	20KSH - 100KSH
10. DELIVERY	ANC CARDS	COOPERATION	FREE
11. MALARIAS TX	CARDS	5-20 MIN	FREE
12. ZINIKI 5	CARDS	5-20 MIN	FREE



Returning home happy with sight regained and heart brimming with hope of life rejuvenated!