HCP CUREBLINDNESS’ WORK IN ETHIOPIA

Globally, 43 million people are blind—80% of this burden is treatable or preventable.

- In Ethiopia, an estimated 1.6 million people are blind, many due to untreated cataracts, a condition that can be cured with a ten-minute surgery and under $25 in material costs.
- HCP Cureblindness has helped increase Ethiopia’s cataract surgical rate (CSR) by 127% since working within the country (2008), resulting in +780K sight-restoring surgeries.
- HCP Cureblindness has provided specialized ophthalmic training for 50% of Ethiopia’s current sub-specialists, increasing local capacity and allowing for more treatments.
- HCP Cureblindness continues to invest in programs and infrastructure having spent over $12 million dollars (to date) to build self-sustaining eye health systems for Ethiopians. The Bahir Dar Speciality Eye Center is currently under construction.
- In Ethiopia, HCP Cureblindness has over 18 implementing partners and a volunteer network of committed collaborators as well as a dedicated country office. Our 2023 acquisition of SightLife, an organization dedicated to addressing corneal disease, expands our reach and magnifies our impact further.

ETHIOPIA MILESTONES

2008: Work begins with first partners in Ethiopia. (Current partner map is shown on the right).
2011: HCP partners with the Eye Bank of Ethiopia to help build in-country capacity to provide quality eye care.
2013: Targeted skill transfer courses for corneal surgeons in Ethiopia starts.
2014: Signs a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Health (MOH) to reduce the backlog of treatable blindness in Ethiopia by doubling the number of cataract surgeries performed in the country.
2019: Establishes a country office with 13 full-time members.
2021: Breaks ground on the Specialty Eye Center in Bahir Dar. The site is selected due to its proximity to the largest number of Ethiopians with the highest rate of blindness.
2022: Signs a second Memorandum of Understanding with MOH to integrate eye care into rural primary health care by providing training, capacity development and supplies to primary eye care units (PECUs) in rural areas of Oromia, South Western and Amhara. HCP hires one full time project manager with a specialty in policy and advocacy to be based in Addis.
2023: HCP Cureblindness is the first NGO to operate in Tigray after a multi-year armed conflict. A surgical outreach completes 1,570 sight-restoring surgeries.

IMPACT IN ETHIOPIA

Since our first in-country partnership in 2008, together with our partners:

783,300 SIGHT-RESTORING SURGERIES

6.37 MILLION EYE SCREENINGS AND BASIC TREATMENTS

60 OPHTHALMIC NURSES TRAINED IN MEDICAL MANAGEMENT AND REFERRAL OF CORNEA CARE, DIABETIC RETINOPATHY AND GLAUCOMA

PARTNERS IN ETHIOPIA

[Map showing various partnerships and hospital locations in Ethiopia]
WHY WE HELP
For millions of people, blindness is treatable. Unfortunately, 90% of people suffering from vision loss live in low- and middle-income countries where a solution isn’t available. Without care, blindness dramatically affects individuals, their families and their communities.

• Blind children are more likely to die in childhood than children with good vision, especially in low-income countries.5
• Vision loss is linked to social exclusion more broadly, including the experience of negative attitudes, violence and bullying, sexual assault, and loneliness.6
• The restoration of sight helps break the cycle of poverty and inequity.7 Studies show that as many as 90% of blind individuals in poor communities cannot work.8 55% of the world’s blind are women - and 90% of women who are blind are living in poverty.9
• Sight helps people learn. Children can learn twice as much when they see clearly.10

HOW WE HELP
HCP’s approach to eye care is unique—it focuses on building local capacity, ensuring quality infrastructure and equipment are available, enabling quality patient care and aiding effective prevention. We provide training and equipment to healthcare professionals, who then go on to provide eye care services in their own communities. This action-based approach builds local leadership, empowers key actors, and develops sustainable practices from the ground up.

WHERE WE STARTED
Founded in 1995 in Nepal by Dr. Geoff Tabin and Dr. Sanduk Ruit on their dream to end needless blindness in the world, HCP Cureblindness today provides critical eye care services, training for ophthalmic professionals, and enhanced eye care infrastructure where they are needed most.

CHANGING THE ARC OF GLOBAL BLINDNESS: WHERE WE WORK
HCP Cureblindness tackles avoidable blindness in over 25 countries in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa with core country operations in Nepal, Bhutan, India, Ethiopia, and Ghana. Expansion initiatives are underway in countries including South Sudan, the Philippines, Tanzania, Eritrea, and Somaliland.

OUR VISION
We envision a world in which no person is needlessly blind.

OUR MISSION
We enable countries to cure needless blindness by developing high-quality, cost-effective eye care in underserved areas of the world.

LOCAL CAPACITY INFRASTRUCTURE & EQUIPMENT PATIENT CARE PREVENTION