Outreach of ORBIS China

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About ORBIS

• As a member of the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB), ORBIS is a non-aligned, non-profit global development organization.

• ORBIS’s mission is to preserve and restore sight by strengthening our partners’ capacity to prevent and treat blindness.

• Over the years, the many global blindness prevention initiatives we have helped to pioneer include VISION 2020: The Right To Sight
The unique blindness situation in China

- One fifth of the world’s blind people are in China
- There is no real non-profit hospitals in China today, even the public hospitals are profit-oriented
- Blindness prevention has not been a priority on government health agenda
- One – off initiatives
Critical gaps in blindness prevention

Supply
- Rising cost
- Profit-oriented
- Lack of qualified doctors in rural areas
- Lack of basic ophthalmic equipment

Demand side
- No outreach
- Demand

Eye care services
Outreach approaches of ORBIS China

• Integrating the eye care into the existing primary health system

• Networking with the village doctors and school teachers

• Screenings in rural areas

• Promotion through media, text messages, and printing materials

• Using satisfied patients as motivators
IT used in outreach activities

• Cyber Sight
  - Partners with access to the internet, and English capabilities
  - How it works

• Video Conferencing

• Text messages
  - The prevalence of the cell phones in China
  - Effective way to keep long-term relationship between the doctors and the village health workers

• Media, such as TV, radio, Internet – for Health Information
Challenges

• Do we really reach the target people?

• Few identified patients come to the hospital after receiving eye check in the screenings

• Little is known about the eye diseases of people who live in remote areas, their needs and perceptions of barriers to eye care services
Research

• Research scope and methodologies

• Objectives
  - Different perceptions about eye diseases from different groups of people
  - Formal and informal health facilities related to the eye health
  - Factors affect the health-seeking behaviors
Main findings:

- their own explanations and treatment
- Women – related their eye problems to “ku” (bitterness), either from the hardship of labour, or from the hard life as women
- Men – their explanations are more specific than women’s and often related to their farm work
- The elder – natural process of life; self-paying and free-of-charge surgeries
- Children – invisible from the basic eye care
Other common factors affect the health-seeking behavior

- cost of the services
- quality of the services including the effectiveness of the treatment, the attitudes of the medical staff, the procedures
- language barriers, esp. for ethnic minorities
- local information channel
- seasons of farming and harvest
- distance and transportation

- Formal and informal health care providers
Discussions

• minor eye diseases & serious eye diseases
• 70% of the eye diseases occurred in the villages are or regarded as minor eye diseases
• how to persuade the elders to accept the self-paying surgeries?
• esp. when the free surgeries through the one-off programmes are provided year by year
Recommendations

• Listening to the needs of the different groups of people and provide services accordingly

• Focus on the quality of the trainings for the village "doctors"

• Cooperate with NGOs and other organizations who work closely with the communities

• Give more attention to IEC/BCC

• Implement Information Technology to create awareness, to identify patients need surgery/treatment and monitor them
Thank you