

The Role of the Volunteer Ophthalmologist in Strengthening Eye Care Infrastructure

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Roles

- It all depends on your own level of expertise
- Teaching
 - Patient care
 - Surgical and diagnostic skills
- Research
- Management and delivery systems



Roles

- Model desirable behaviors
- Help Improve Quality
- Collegiality
- Extra pair of hands



High volume established hospital

- An established institution can carefully employ a volunteer for specific projects.
- Sometimes a volunteer becomes another person needing management and help.



Special expertise

- Clinical research projects.
- Subspecialty programs that the hospital does not yet offer or could use strengthening.
- Sharing of best practices

Before you go

- Where?
 - Choose a culture that already appeals to you and you have some affinity for.
- With whom?
- NGO vs group of physicians.
- Why?

Before you go

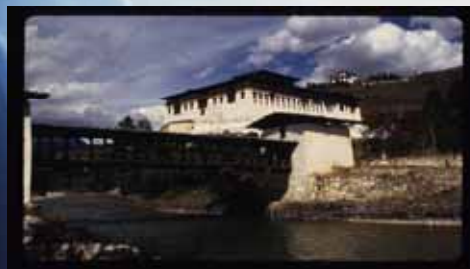
- Do you have the training and experience for what you might encounter?
- Do you know your limitations?
- Learn as much as you can about the conditions you are likely to find.

Best Practices

- Have a thorough knowledge of best practices.
- Evaluate of what is being done
- And modify keeping basic principles in mind



How many cases can you do in an hour?



It's the team not the surgeon



It's up to you to make sure that the right team is in place



The Team

- Understand your own limitations
- Understand all the things that are done for you at your institution.



The Team

- Assess the needs and capabilities of surgeons, assistants, support staff.
- Evaluate OR procedures.



Teach the ideal, adapt to the circumstances



What cataract operations should you teach?



Phaco or SICS?

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| ▪ More mature cataracts | ▪ Simple procedure |
| ▪ More expensive | ▪ Can be used in any type of cataract |
| ▪ Requires more staff training and sophistication | ▪ Low technology |
| ▪ Requires more outside support | ▪ Minimal support |
| ▪ Complications may require unavailable specialist services | |

Summary

- Needs
- Capabilities
- Adapt to local situation, but do not compromise quality
- Be open to learning from the local situation and be flexible
- Do not be judgmental