



Paediatric Eye Surgery Mission – Tamale, Northern Ghana

A joint initiative supported by the International Rotary Fellowship of Healthcare Professionals (IRFHP)

Background

Childhood blindness remains a profound challenge across the world. While the United States has approximately one eye surgeon per 20,000 people, India averages one per 50,000, and much of Africa has only one surgeon per million. This shortage contributes to a high burden of preventable childhood blindness. Sub-Saharan Africa alone has over 80,000 children living with cataracts at birth or early age—conditions that require timely surgical intervention.[]

Mission Overview

A team of dedicated ophthalmologists led by Rtn. Dr. K. V. Ravishankar and Rtn. Dr. Uma Ravishankar of Usha Kiran Eye Hospital, Mysore, India, and Dr. Luxme Hariharan from Madison, WI, USA, conducted the 'Paediatric Eye Surgery Mission' from 21st to 27th September 2025 at Tamale Eye Hospital in Northern Ghana. The mission aimed to provide critical surgical interventions for children suffering from cataracts, squints, and other vision-threatening conditions.

Impact

During the week-long initiative, 28 children underwent life-changing eye surgeries—36 eyes operated in total. For many of these young patients, this mission restored not just sight but the promise of education, independence, and dignity. This marks the 28th overseas mission by the team, who continue to serve local and international communities with compassion and expertise.





Partnership and Gratitude

The success of this mission was made possible through the invaluable partnership with the Tamale Eye Hospital and its leadership. Special thanks to Dr. Judith Simon and her team for their unwavering support and collaboration. This initiative exemplifies the spirit of 'Service Above Self' and highlights the profound impact of international cooperation in healthcare delivery.

Reflections and Future Vision

Despite the mission's success, the team acknowledges that the need remains vast—'not even a drop in the ocean.' However, every drop counts in transforming lives. The volunteer team, together with Rotary and IRFHP, remains committed to expanding these missions, training local clinicians, and ensuring that no child is left in darkness due to lack of access to care.

