

Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition



FPMT Charitable Projects – Amdo Eye Hospital September 2011

The Amdo Eye Hospital (Qinghai Woesser Cataract Treatment Center), in Xining, Tibet is dedicated to providing continuous, sustainable and quality eye care to all and in particular to those from underprivileged backgrounds.

The hospital is modeled on the very successful Lhasa Eye Clinic and Dr. Sanduk Ruit – who founded the Lhasa Eye Clinic as well as the highly successful Tilganga Eye Center in Kathmandu– is training the Amdo Eye Hospital staff and is also committed to oversee operations for the next two years, ensuring the highest standards in the hospital.

For the past 6 years FPMT raised all of the funds to build the Amdo Eye Hospital, with the kind help of many benefactors in particular The Tanoto Foundation and Compassion Paris. The land the hospital was built on was offered free of charge by the local government and the total cost to build the hospital was US\$605,970.

In August 2011 Ven.Pemba Sherpa (FPMT Board member, resident teacher and co-director of Cham Tse Ling, in Hong Kong) visited the Amdo Eye Hospital to report on its progress and operations. I hope that you will enjoy this update and news.

THE STAFF

Currently there are 24 people working in the hospital, this includes 4 doctors and 4 nurses who visit from the local Government hospital a few times a week to perform the actual surgeries. There is one full time nurse taking care of inpatients and 6 other people working as secretaries, treasurers, at the registration desk, giving medicines, as well as guards, a cook, a driver and a cleaning lady.



Mr.Gendun Khem (3rd from left) director of the Amdo Eye Hospital with members of the staff and nurses



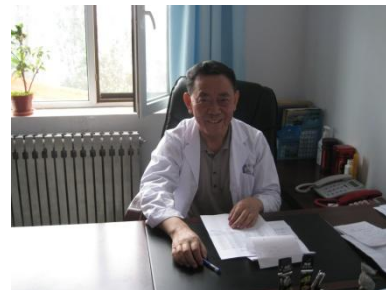
THE BUILDING

The hospital is three and half stories high and has 36 beds to accommodate patients.



Dr. Sanduk Ruit (4th from left) at the inauguration of the Amdo Eye Hospital building July 2010

It has three office rooms for the board members and an office and bedroom for Dr. Ruit for when he visits to train the staff.



There is a big meeting, training room and operating theater, as well as various offices, registration office and dispensary counter.



Also in the hospital is a kitchen and staff canteen room, guard room, and on the roof level is laundry room, two big dormitories and medical checkup rooms.



Mr. Gendun on the ground floor in the parking lot of the Amdo Eye Hospital

HOW THE HOSPITAL RUNS

The main purpose of the hospital is to offer low cost and if possible free cataract eye surgeries to all.



Dr. Sanduk Ruit performing eye cataract surgeries

The full price for cataract surgery is about US\$750 (4800 CNY), however for patients who cannot afford, the surgery is offered for free or whatever amount they can afford. At this stage it is hard to run the hospital totally free of charge, but the plan is to be able to offer more and more free or low cost surgeries, as the hospital expands.

Currently the 4 doctors and nurses from the local Government hospital come in a few times a week to see patients and perform the surgeries. Dr. Ruit will come a few times a year to train more of the local doctors and also to check on how the hospital is running.

The [inauguration of the building](#) was in July 2010, it took a year to equip the hospital and get the necessary documents to be able to perform the surgeries and in August 2011 the hospital was officially opened to the public. In the last 4 weeks the hospital has performed 8 surgeries and 4 of these were offered free. As the hospital becomes better known and receives more funding and equipment it will be able to perform many more surgeries. Currently the hospital is one of the largest hospitals in Xining dedicated solely to performing eye surgery.

One of the highest priorities of the hospital is to begin to offer smaller outreach microsurgery eye clinic camps in remote areas. This is extremely important in order to be able to reach more people and especially for those who are too poor or unable to travel to Xining.

The prevalence of blindness in Amdo is four times higher than the national average for China, one reason for this is due to the severe weather in the area.

This simple surgical procedure can change someone's life. Dr. Ruit has said: "It is the best thing a human can do in five minutes."

IMMEDIATE NEEDS

The immediate need of the hospital is to purchase a laser surgery machine (Phacoemulsification machine). The cost for one of these machines is **US\$220,330** (1,280,000 CNY). FPMT is currently fundraising in order to be able to sponsor one, which will greatly help in the hospitals efficiency and will directly benefit those needing the surgeries. The phacoemulsification machine breaks the cataract into tiny pieces and then suctions those pieces from the eye through a very small incision. Prior to the development of the phaco machine, the cataract was normally removed in one piece, requiring a larger incision, sutures, and more trauma to the eye. By having the phacoemulsification machine the whole procedure is much faster, less than 15 minutes per eye, it allows the patient to walk out of the surgical suite and resume normal activities within a few days.



ANNUAL COSTS

The annual cost to run the hospital is US\$125,313 (800,000 CNY). Currently the Amdo Eye Hospital is applying for grants and local Government funding in order to be self sustainable.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche recently said:

By offering to the Amdo Eye Hospital you are benefiting others who are in great need, in particularly the people in Tibet who are blind, helping them to open their eyes and see, what an incredible joy and happiness you are giving them!

However many hundreds and thousands of people who receive help from the Amdo Eye Hospital, for as long as it exists, they receive this unbelievable benefit because of your kindness and generosity.

For more information please visit the [web page](#) which has photos, updates, reports and video of the inauguration.

Thank you to all the kind benefactors who have helped to build the hospital and please do consider continuing to supporting this incredibly worthwhile project, in whatever way possible.

Thank you,

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