

Sight Restoration Project Among Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) in Dalori Camp, Borno State, January 2016

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Introduction: The insurgency in the north eastern Nigeria took its worst toll in Borno State which has more devastation in terms of loss of thousands of lives and properties/means of livelihood worth billions of naira. These results into tens of thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) (mostly elderly men, women and children most of whom were orphaned as a result of the insurgencies by the renowned terrorist a.k.a “Boko Haram”)¹.

Objective: To restore sight among the IDPs with operable cataracts in Dalori IDPs Camp in Borno state.

To screen and treat cases of allergic/vernal conjunctivitis among the internally displaced children in Dalori IDPs Camp in Borno State.

Methods: A descriptive study comprising of IDPs who were mainly from Kanuri, Shua Arabs, Hausa Fulani tribe had since been booked in the Nigeria Airforce Emergency Hospital (Figure 1) located in the IDP camp for small incision cataract surgery with posterior chamber intraocular lens implantation. The outcome of the procedure was analyzed.



Figure 1: The Nigerian Airforce Emergency Hospital Dalori IDP Camp Dalori Borno State 50km from Dalori village, Gwoza and Sambisa Forest

Procedure: The patients with operable cataracts were counseled about the small incision cataract surgical procedure with posterior chamber intraocular lens implantation (Figure 2). All patients had routine pre-operative investigations (Biometry, full blood count, fasting blood sugar, retroviral screening, and urinalysis) and preoperative vital signs (blood pressure/pulse rate) were evaluated. Informed consent was obtained and all patients were screened for explosives/IUDs by security operatives.

They all underwent small incision cataract surgery with posterior chamber intraocular lens implantation and were reviewed on the first day post-operatively. All post-operative medications were instilled as at when due, initially by the nurses for 2 days. Patients were discharged back to their camps after 2 days.



Figure 2: Surgical intervention

Results: A total of 18 patients underwent surgery and all of them were above 49 years of age. There were 15 male patients (83.3%). All patients had preoperative visual acuity $<6/60$. On the first day post-op three (16.7%) patients had visual acuity $\geq 6/60$, four (22.2%) patients had visual acuity between $6/60-6/18$, and 11(61.1%) patients had visual acuity $>6/18$. As at one week post-operatively, the visual acuity of 14(77.8%) patients had improved to $6/18$ or better. In all, 17 (94.4%) patients experienced improvement in vision within 1 week after the procedure.

Discussion: Most of the cases done had good vision after small incision cataract surgery² with profound excitement and gratitude to the entire team especially the great and gallant soldiers and officers of the Nigerian Air Force.

Conclusion: The phase 1 project is a tremendous success in preparing the internally displaced persons who can now see to return to their various settlements across the insurgency ravaged areas³.

References

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