

PROPOSED GLOBAL GRANT FOR “PREVENTING HEARING LOSS AMONG NEPALESE CHILDREN THROUGH MIDDLE EAR SURGERIES AND PRIMARY EAR CARE EDUCATION”



(Picture in Nidan Hospital, Kathmandu, Nepal)

Introduction

The Rotary Club of Potomac-Bethesda (Maryland) prepared this document to provide a brief overview of our proposed Rotary District 7620 Global Grant application (I.D. number GG1637950). The proposed Global Grant is designed to benefit impoverished Nepalese school-age children who are at risk of becoming deaf due to correctible middle ear problems. Many such problems result from middle ear infections, some of which may lead or have already led to eardrum perforations.

We request that you consider making a donation in support of this \$44,000 Grant. We need to raise approximately \$12,500 in additional funds for this Grant to be approved.

Hearing Impairment in Nepal and the World

The incidence of deafness in Nepal is among the very highest in the world. In 2012, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that 5.3 percent of the world's population suffers from disabling hearing loss, and 9 percent of these cases involve children. WHO also concluded that children in South Asia have a higher rate of hearing impairment than children in any other region of the world.

A 1991 statistical study by the charitable organization Britain Nepal Otology Services (BRINOS) concluded that 16.6 percent of the Nepalese population was

significantly deaf at that time, with either ear exhibiting worse than 30 dB hearing threshold (HTL) 1.0 to 4.0 kHz, or 50 dB HTL 0.5 kHz. According to that survey, 70 percent of those in Nepal who were suffering from middle ear infections or their aftermath were school-age children; and 50 percent of ear disease in Nepal was preventable. There is no reason to believe that these statistics are not true today.

Updated hearing loss statistics on a nationwide basis for Nepal are not available. However, ***recent data supports a very important point: There is only one ear, nose, and throat (ENT) surgeon in Nepal for every quarter of a million people.*** This situation can be accurately described as a silent crisis of significant proportion.

Planned Activities

- Assuming the Global Grant is approved, over the next year, *Ear Care Nepal* (ECN), a charitable organization, will provide **ear screenings to 5,000 children** who attend public schools or Buddhist monastic schools in the Katmandu Valley. (ECN's web site is **www.earcarenepal.com**.)
- **The Grant will pay for 100 of these children to have middle ear surgeries either to restore their hearing or to prevent further loss of hearing.** ECN's volunteer ENT surgeons will perform these surgeries without remuneration, resulting in a cost per-surgery of only **\$183**, the average amount this Grant will pay for these surgeries.

The \$183 figure reflects only the out-of-pocket costs actually incurred. Without discounts provided by Nidan Hospital in Kathmandu, the absence of surgical charges, a low negotiated fee agreement with a group of local anesthesiologists, and subsidies for lab work and pharmacy services, the unit cost of these surgeries would be **\$344, still a bargain price compared to the costs of performing identical surgeries in the United States.**

- Approximately **\$19,000** from this Grant will be used to pay for additional surgical and ear screening equipment, including (1) a ***portable, battery-operated audiometer***, to overcome problems posed by frequent electrical power outages in Nepal; (2) ***an impedance meter***, a very important diagnostic tool that ECN does not have but that can lead to better diagnoses of ear problems, (3) an ***operating microscope*** that would enable ECN to perform some surgeries outside a hospital setting, and (4) ***microsurgical tools*** to accommodate such surgeries.
- Although manufacturers' warranties for each of these pieces of equipment would cover either one or two years of maintenance, the Grant will provide an additional **\$3,000** for the purpose of maintaining this equipment through the end of the fifth year after the date of purchase of each piece of equipment.

- Finally, funds will be provided to pay for a “**Community Ear Assistant**” for **one year to aid in ear care educational efforts** that would reach over 5,000 children, their teachers, and some of their parents and guardians, as well as for training of the Community Ear Assistant, printing of additional educational materials, and provision of funds for gasoline necessary to fulfill the goals of this Grant. The Community Ear Assistant will also aid in ear screenings and help during ear surgeries.

How You Can Help

- If you represent a Rotary Club, your Club’s gift of “**District Designated Funds**” (DDF) will be eligible for a dollar per dollar match by the Rotary Foundation’s World Fund. Thus, \$1,000 in DDF would be eligible to become \$2,000 for the purposes of this Grant.
- If you donate cash either from your Club or as a personal or Foundation donation, please write a check to the “**PB Rotary Club Foundation**,” one the memo line insert “Nepal Hearing Project,” and mail it to PB Rotary, c/o 8 Old Club Court, Rockville, Maryland 20852, or use your credit card on-line by clicking on the “Donate” button on our website, **www.pbrotary.org**. Your check or credit card donation will be eligible for a 50 percent match by The World Fund.

Questions

- If you would like to obtain a copy of our Grant application or have any questions, please send an e-mail to **bob_fuhrman@msn.com**.



(Picture of Dr. Milan Maharjan, Chairperson of ECN, Providing Ear Care Education to Adults)