



It's our mission  
for eyes in need.



## IRIS Mundial news / December 2014

By Dr Francine Lavallée, optometrist

### A NEW PERMANENT PROGRAM IN THE NORTH OF HAITI: PPFB OF LIMBE

**Nearly 3,000 patients have benefited!**

Our experience in the region of Labrousse was such positive and successful one that IRIS Mundial made the decision to create a second permanent program in the Limbe area, more specifically in the North Department of Haiti, in collaboration with the CEDI-VE (*Centre for Education and Integrated Development - Village of Hope*), our partner for this second program.

In October 2013, a vision screening clinic set up in the CEDI-VE's premises and a local team was formed to be able to provide education and awareness sessions regarding vision and the benefits of receiving an eye exam. We provided vision screening examinations in schools in the locality and by having a mobile clinic.



The PPLC team (Programme for the prevention and fight against blindness) Limbe consists of a nurse, an assistant and two local residents who take to heart the needs of the population. Radio announcements are regularly broadcasted throughout the community to raise awareness of visual problems and make our program better known.

During the first year, nearly **3,000 patients** have benefited from the program. The team visited 21 schools: nearly **1,800 children** were evaluated, and **144 teachers**. As for the adult population, **1,044 screenings** (57% women) were performed at the CEDI-VE clinic or mobile clinics in different localities of the region. People who need reading glasses or sunglasses can now easily get them. Those requiring further examination are referred to our clinic in Limbe and can benefit from eye exam onsite and purchase prescription glasses, and eye medications. Several people were also able to benefit from cataract surgery or be treated for glaucoma.

*The 2-year program plans to reach 10,000 people, including 5,000 schoolchildren, through visual screenings in addition to offering a hundred surgeries to those in need. Visual services are not accessible to most Haitian due to poverty level. The Program for the Prevention and Fight against Blindness in Limbe aims to provide access to comprehensive eye care, goal being to improve quality of life to those in need and to actively participate in economic and social development of the community.*



## THE GIFT OF SIGHT:

« CEDI-Village de l'espoir au cœur de son action. Sa se yon granmoun Camp-Coq, ki pat wè. Gras a Programme de Prévention et de Lutte Contre la Cécité (PPLC) Li opere li wè, se te yon mèvèy pou li. Merci à notre Partenaire IRIS MUNDIAL », Djery Batiste, mobilizing assistants of the Limbe PPFB program, January 2015

*CEDI-VE into the action. He is an elderly person of Camp-Coq who wasn't able to see. Through the Program for the Prevention and Fight against Blindness (PPFB), he was operated on and now he can see. This was a wonder for him. Thank you to our IRIS MUNDIAL Partner.*



## TRAINING, MONITORING AND SYNERGY BETWEEN THE PROGRAMS, HAITI

From June 4 to 11, 2014, Dr. Marie-Chantal Hudon and Dr. Francine Lavallée have visited Haiti to continue the teams' training of the two ongoing permanent programs. Thus, the team's members of Limbe and Labrousse have gathered to share their experiences and exchange to promote synergy and mutual aid between the programs.

## FIELD TESTIMONY OF AN IRIS MUNDIAL VOLUNTEER

Although Dr. Marie-Chantal Hudon has been preparing glasses as a volunteer for Iris Mundial for the past three years, this particular mission was her first experience in a developing country. Two trainers accompanied the teams to different screening sites in the community; sometimes travelling to different areas in three on one motorcycle! Upon her return to Canada, she said:

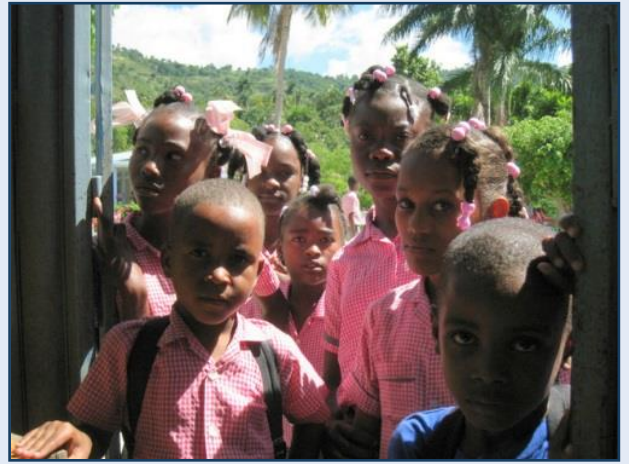
*"I was delighted to take off with Dr. Lavallee to participate in the training and meet the various members of the PPFB Labrousse team. I observed their involvement, their determination and their know-how — always open and eager to improve their knowledge and capacities. I admired the respectfulness of these individuals as they always favored the elderly by allowing them to be examined first. Always carefully dressed, the patients seemed very grateful for this provided service. I had the chance to meet people who work in the humanitarian sphere and I admire their determination to move forward in small steps albeit in the right direction while maintaining their enthusiasm and respecting the Haitian culture and pace. Cooperation is the value that emerges the most from my experience. And while they thank us for our participation— my only wish is to tell them how in reality they are the ones to have enriched us and taught us the true value of life."*



## THE PPBF INTO LABROUSSE: ACCESS TO EYE CARE, EVEN FOR THE FARTHEST VILLAGES OF HAITI

**More than 14 000 people have benefited from eye care**

In 2010, IRIS Mundial attempted to set up a program that would lead to accessible eyecare for the population Labrousse, Haiti. The challenge was met with great success and having a permanent eyecare delivery system in that particular region is undoubtedly a huge accomplishment! Already, more than 14 000 of the poorest in Haiti were able to receive quality eye care in Labrousse, considered a PPFB experiment (program for prevention and fight against blindness).



### **An experienced and efficient team**

Thanks to the training provided by IRIS Mundial volunteers and the acquired experience in the field, the PPFB team, consisting of a nurse and an assistant, worked diligently throughout the year, using a four-wheel motorbike to reach adults and children from different communities, even the most remote one.



Miriame Cadet, nurse and program manager, informed us: *“The program is greatly appreciated by the population living in extreme poverty conditions. Often a simple pair of glasses can allow a father to return to work and earn a living or a child to succeed in school.”*

### **Goals achieved**

During the past year alone, the team visited 29 schools in addition to performing visual screenings for over **3000 children and 201 teachers**. Our mobile clinics have examined nearly **1,000 adults**. Furthermore, 165 of those were seen by an ophthalmologist, at the clinic IRIS Mundial, located within the Health Center Notre-Dame-de-Lourde de Labrousse. Several patients also received ophthalmic medications, cataract surgeries, prescription glasses or sunglasses.

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## RENEWAL OF PPLC LABROUSSE: GIVING SIGHT TO THOSE WHO NEED IT MOST.

### **The relevance of the program**

Nippes is one of the most deprived and neglected areas of Haiti due to insufficient economic resources, very high unemployment, geographic isolation and transportations difficulties. Those Haitians live with the means from the previous century, that is to say, without running water or electricity in addition to using donkeys in order to travel these treacherous mountains. It's a three to four hour adventurous journey for the dedicated volunteers who make it there! Not surprisingly, these isolated residents are very welcoming and their facial expression of gratefulness is priceless. Currently, the needs are still great in this community where IRIS Mundial has been helping for a few years by offering ongoing program of eye care.



### **Awareness and prevention of blindness**

The program also includes an educational component for the prevention of eye diseases. Miriame Cadet told us: *«Cases of severe glaucoma and those of undiagnosed and untreated diabetic retinopathy are rampant. There is a lot of work to be done to prevent loss of vision.»* Over the past year, the team visited 29 schools and delivered over 45 educational sessions in gathering places such as churches, in addition to providing information over the local radio, which has just been implemented.

The relevance of PPLC Labrousse is unarguable and the existing team did an outstanding job. Following these encouraging results, IRIS Mundial has decided to support the program for yet another year, providing the funds, equipment and resources needed for it to function properly & efficiently. In order to ensure sustainability, from now on, the activities of PPLC will be integrated with regular services provided by the Health Center Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes de Labrousse.

# FROM OUR HEART TO YOURS, THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!

To carry out its projects, IRIS Mundial must rely on its partners, employees and volunteers.

## ❖ \$ 5,000 through the RBC golf Tournament

On June 17, 2013, the RBC Royal Bank Business Centres of the Laval, Laurentians, and Lanaudiere regions in Quebec, held a Golf Tournament at the "Quatre Domaines" Golf Club in Mirabel, Quebec. The amount of \$41,500 was donated to 9 various foundations. At the end of the tournament an amount of \$5000 was donated to IRIS Mundial! On behalf of the less fortunate, we would like to thank the RBC Royal Bank as well as IRIS The Visual Group who sponsored the tournament.



## ❖ \$ 1,000 through Caisse Desjardins

Thank you to Mr. Gerald Bourgault, volunteer and treasurer of IRIS Mundial, CEO of the Caisse Populaire Desjardins du Sud de l'Islet who presented the \$1000 award to IRIS Mundial as part of a performance contest.



Pass-Action team 2013-2014 with, on the back row, from left to right, Dr Jean-Pierre Tchang, speaker, president of l'ALPHIS Mr. Guy Dubé, Mr. Marco Pelletier and Dr Lyne Paré, volunteer of IRIS Mundial.

## ❖ The generosity of our IRIS optometrists and staff

We thank all our team members and optometrists who have donated their PVI (virtual points) over this past year, totaling over \$ 7,700!! We thank them for their generosity. To all our team members working in our IRIS offices, for their immense work with recovery and preparation of used eyeglasses ... THANK YOU so much for all your help.

## ❖ The valuable contribution of ALPHIS


Thank you to Pass-Action team (Emploi-Québec) who worked several weeks this year to prepare and repair used eyeglasses, to give them a second life. Thank you to ALPHIS \* for its collaboration on this project.

\* Association for the Disabled of L'Islet-Sud

## NEW GENERAL MANAGER

We are very proud to announce the appointment of Mrs. Catherine Rioux as General Manager of IRIS Mundial. Originally from Repentigny, Quebec, Mrs. Rioux has a Bachelor's Degree in International Politics as well as a Master's degree of Management in International Development and Humanitarian Action. Her dynamism, leadership and field experience, particularly in Haiti, will undoubtedly be major assets for IRIS Mundial. We would like to welcome her to our team!



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