



35TH ANNIVERSARY: 35 YEARS OF VISION

2018 IMPACT

ADULTS SCREENED
263,863



CHILDREN SCREENED
81,114



ADULT SURGERIES
33,225



CHILD SURGERIES
349



GLASSES DISTRIBUTED
13,793



YOUNG WOMEN PROVIDED
AN EDUCATION TOWARD
ECONOMIC FREEDOM
158



344,977
Total Screenings

33,574
Total Surgeries

This year, **Combat Blindness International (CBI)** celebrates **35 years of service alleviating avoidable blindness throughout the world.**

In the life of our organization, we have supported over 2.2 million eye screenings and over 360,000 cataract surgeries. Working with partners in India, Myanmar, Lebanon, Kenya, South Africa, Nigeria, Mali, Namibia, Botswana, Paraguay, Brazil and the United States, CBI is on the forefront of creating sustainable solutions in eye care.

In this two-part article, we will share a snapshot of CBI's 35-year impact in preventing and eliminating avoidable blindness through direct patient care and capacity building.

CATARACT

CBI's International Cataract Program started small by initiating four eye camps and supporting 319 cataract surgeries at King George Medical College in Lucknow, India in 1984. In 2018, CBI supported the screening of 344,977 men,

women and children, 33,225 cataract surgeries and the distribution of 13,793 pairs of glasses. We have expanded our work to include 15 countries on 4 continents all to bring sustainable, world-class eye care to areas with the greatest need.

This year, CBI will complete the *Bring Sight to Botswana* project, where our goal was to alleviate the backlog of 6,000 cataract patients awaiting surgery in the country. May 21, 2019 will mark the start of the 6th and final campaign in this effort. Botswana has a population of 2.8 million people and it has the third highest prevalence of blindness and visual impairment in Africa. The vast majority of visual impairment in Botswana is caused by refractive error or cataract, both easily treatable. Working with our partners, Dr. Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital, Cambridge Global Health Partners, PEEK and the Botswana Ministry of Health and Welfare, we will eliminate blindness due to cataracts in the entire country of Botswana in 2019.



Child being screened for glasses in Gujarat, India.

We are proud of the patient care we've been able to provide in 35 years.

PEDIATRIC

CBI's International Pediatrics Program started with a 2-year xerophthalmia project at Sitapur Eye Hospital in Sitapur, India in 1984. Xerophthalmia causes a melting of the cornea due to a lack of Vitamin A in the diet and if left untreated results in irreversible blindness. This project was one of CBI's first major efforts at preventing and eliminating both low vision and blindness in children. This project confirmed that a lack of Vitamin A is a major cause of xerophthalmia. As part of this project, CBI gave children at risk of developing xerophthalmia Vitamin A boosters and parents education on the importance of Vitamin A and seeds to grow vegetables rich in Vitamin A.

Since then, CBI's efforts have focused on school screenings. It is estimated that 80% of learning is visual, so early childhood screening for refractive errors and eye conditions is critical.

Through school screenings, we ensure that pediatric eye diseases and conditions are identified and treated as soon as possible. If vision problems are caught early enough in a child's development, we can preserve vision in order to ensure a child's ability to learn. Whether through screening or providing glasses and surgeries, we believe that each child should have the opportunity to reach their highest potential.

CBI currently supports worldwide eye screenings for 80,000 to 90,000 children per year, including children in India, Africa, South America and the United States. One such program is CBI's partnership with Usha Kiran Eye Hospital in Mysore, India. In this program, children are screened for refractive errors, eye diseases and given basic healthcare. Working in one of the most rural areas of India, this program has screened more than 170,000 children, provided more than 4,000 pairs of glasses and supported over 600 pediatric eye surgeries to date.

We are proud of the patient care we've been able to provide in 35 years and we look forward to continuing to work toward a world free of preventable blindness.

Read our next newsletter to learn how we work with communities to train eye care professionals, build infrastructure and bring eye care to the doorsteps of those who need it most.

Our work is made possible by the contributions of donors like you! Celebrate with us throughout 2019 by using the hashtag #35yearsofvision.



BY COUNTRY



263,786 Adults Screened
77,645 Children Screened
30,883 Adult Surgeries
349 Child Surgeries
13,793 Glasses Distributed



2,342 Adult Surgeries



77 Adults Screened
3,469 Children Screened



BIJAYANANDA PATNAIK EYE CENTER-KEONJHAR

Combat Blindness International established the Bijayananda Patnaik Eye Center last year in Keonjhar, Odisha in partnership with the Bijayananda Patnaik Family, the Jack DeLoss Taylor Charitable Trust and L.V. Prasad Eye Institute. Odisha is one of the poorest states in India with a blindness rate nearly double the national average. The city of Keonjhar has a population of 1.8 million and the closest eye center is located in Bhubaneswar, which is 220 kilometers away.

Since its opening in March 2018, the Bijayananda Patnaik Eye Center has screened 2,130 children and distributed 51 pairs of glasses. They've screened 13,205 adults and provided 315 cataract surgeries.



Jatani received her cataract surgery free of charge and her vision was completely restored.



One such patient is Jatani Patra, who visited Bijayananda Patnaik Eye Center in March of 2018. Her vision had diminished over the course of 2 years and was negatively affecting her quality of life. She couldn't go up or down stairs by herself and was having trouble reading her medication bottles. She received her cataract surgery free of charge and her vision was completely restored. Jatani is very happy to be able to see clearly again. She expressed enormous gratitude to the donors from CBI who helped support her surgery.



*Reena Chandra Rajpal, MPH,
CBI's new Executive Director.*

WELCOME OUR NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Combat Blindness International is excited to announce that Reena Chandra Rajpal, MPH, will assume the role of Executive Director starting in April. Reena currently serves as the President of CBI's Board of Directors. She will continue this role in an ex-officio capacity as she assumes the Executive Director role. Reena was the Director of Development for the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Nursing at the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association. Prior to this, she was the Director of Development at Combat Blindness International for 6 years and joined the CBI Board of Directors in 2013. Reena brings with her 18 years of experience in strategic planning, development, grant making and management for nonprofit organizations, higher education and international NGOs.

Reena is excited to help continue CBI's legacy of alleviating preventable blindness and serving those less fortunate, saying, "Combat Blindness International's ability to help so many people around the world for so little is incredible. For \$25, you can give someone their whole world back. That, to me, is impact and I'm proud to be part of this organization."





Combat Blindness
INTERNATIONAL
1984 - 2019

Combat Blindness International

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Combat Blindness International is
dedicated to eliminating preventable
blindness worldwide by providing
sustainable, equitable solutions for sight
through partnership and innovation.



On Thursday, October 10, help us
celebrate **World Sight Day 2019**
Find out more online at
www.combatblindness.org/wsd19

For \$25, you can change a person's whole world.
Visit www.combatblindness.org/donate today!