



Combat Blindness
INTERNATIONAL

**GIVE THE GIFT OF
SIGHT FOR A LIFETIME**



Become a monthly ally and give a transformational gift at combatblindness.org/donate

\$5/MONTH

Give someone sight so they can return to work.

\$10/MONTH

Give sight to 4 individuals so they can contribute to their community.

\$15/MONTH

Give sight to a child (support an eye surgery) that will empower them to return to school.

WINTER 2022 NEWSLETTER

Dear CBI family and friends,

As we move into the holiday season, I wish you and your family peace, happiness and good health.

Our resolve, and that of our partners, to provide quality, equitable care to so many in need remains steadfast and firm. Since the Pandemic, the number of patients we serve has continued to increase and that is because of the strength and determination of our partners and support of our donors

For the woman receiving an eye screening for the first time, for the man regaining his sight after a free cataract surgery, for the young child whose screening and glasses allows them to see the chalkboard, and for the young woman whose education and training means she can be financially independent, we are committed to opening the doors to hope and opportunity through our initiatives and programs.

This past August my daughter, Naiya, and I had the pleasure of visiting Dr Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital in Delhi, India. We went deep into a rural community to see firsthand the dedicated work of our Aadya screeners. In this newsletter, you will read in Naiya's words how this trip impacted her.

Recently, you joined our World Sight Day event to learn about CBI in 2022 and watch *Aamna's Story* - a powerful and inspiring glimpse into one woman's eye care journey. If you have not already, I encourage you to watch *Aamna's Story* on CBI's website at combatblindness.org/world-sight-day.

As this year comes to a close, we invite you to participate in CBI's brand-new Year-End Campaign that asks, "**How far can \$25 travel?**" The campaign highlights how little it takes to make a transformational impact on someone's life.

Thanks to a generous matching gift of \$50,000 from our committed board of directors, you can double your gift and help even more people gain access to preventive eye care.

We continue to be humbled by your generosity and enthusiasm for the work of Combat Blindness International. Your support is transformational in many ways, allowing people to regain their independence. With sight, they can return to work, go to school, take care of their family, and participate in their community.

This holiday season, we ask that you give from your heart and give generously.

With gratitude,

Reena Chandra, MPH
President & Executive Director

NAIYA'S STORY



Naiya Rajpal and Reena Chandra, CBI Executive Director, sharing a fun moment with a group of Aadya screeners.

This past August, I traveled with Combat Blindness International (CBI) to see the Aadya Initiative, a program that not only restores sight, but also empowers women. I have been to India with CBI before, but this project was truly incredible to witness.

We started the day traveling to a small village outside Saharanpur, where we met with a group of Aadya screeners. We followed two of the screeners on their route through the village. I was shocked at how many of the people in the village had never had an eye exam. While the screeners administered the exam, it was my job to observe and to take photos of this process. What I saw in my photos was the joy these women had while doing their jobs, they seemed so thrilled to be making a difference.

Three patients were identified as needing further care, so we followed them to the local vision center. There they were screened again to confirm the Aadya screeners' results.



An Aadya worker screens a patient in a village outside Saharanpur.

I was so impressed with the young woman who was trained in Dr. Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital's (SCEH) Certified Ophthalmic Paramedic Program (COP) to be an optical technician. She was so confident examining and diagnosing the patient.

One patient of the three would need cataract surgery. We soon traveled from the vision center to SCEH's surgical center in Saharanpur. In addition to touring the surgical center, I also had the opportunity to meet with about 25 Aadya screeners. As my mom translated for me in Hindi, I understood the excitement that was buzzing around the room. I specifically remember one screener talking about how she was so happy to finally be making her own money all while giving back to her village. She had flexibility to work and take care of her children. In her words, this job changed her life.

Seeing this project in action was an amazing experience. As a volunteer, I am proud to be a part of CBI's commitment to women empowerment and look forward to helping support this initiative in the future.



A Vision Center tech examines a patient.

WORLD SIGHT DAY

Thanks to you, we exceeded our 2022 World Sight Day goal! CBI raised over \$125,000, which includes a generous matching gift from a friend and loyal donor of CBI.



We invite you to watch *Aamna's Story* and the full World Sight Day program on our website at combatblindness.org/world-sight-day

Our October 13 virtual World Sight Day event included updates on CBI's impact this year, a fun silent auction, and a film that followed Aamna, a woman from rural India, as she navigated her eye care journey and showed the impact regaining her sight has on her life and that of her family.

You can view *Aamna's Story* on CBI's website at combatblindness.org/world-sight-day.

A special thank you to Paul Berkgigler of P. Berkgigler Design and Multimedia, and Deepanjali Chopra of Deepanjali Productions for their amazing work on this film.

We are deeply grateful to all who joined us and gave from your hearts.

RIGHT TO SIGHT CLINIC



The CBI-supported World Sight Day Right to Sight Clinic was once again held on October 8th. Spearheaded by Dr. Anna Momont of the UW-Madison Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences (DOVS), the dedicated volunteers gave free eye care to a total of 58 underinsured patients. Huge thanks to Dr. Momont and the DOVS team!

BECOME A CBI ALLY!

- Be a monthly donor and see your impact throughout the year.
- Be a CBI Volunteer.
- Follow, like and share our posts on social media.
- Have your company match your gift and double your impact.
- Host a Facebook fundraiser.



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A Kenyan patient celebrating with her family after receiving cataract surgery.



How far can \$25 travel?

- Coffee for a week
- Provide a cataract surgery for a parent, so they can return to work and support their family

With CBI, \$25 is all it takes to create a ripple of change. Donate today!



Restoring Sight. Empowering People.