



Combat Blindness
INTERNATIONAL

WINTER 2021 NEWSLETTER



MAKE 2021 COUNT - DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT

You can end 2021 on a happy note by giving others the gift of sight — and by doubling your impact.

All gifts will be matched up to \$60,000 through Dec. 31, thanks to the generosity of a longtime CBI ally and our amazing Board members.

For every \$100 donation that is matched:

8 adults will receive vision-restoring surgery, or

400 children will be screened for vision diseases, or

40 people will receive glasses.

Please give at:
[combatblindness.org/donate!](https://combatblindness.org/donate/)

Dear CBI family and friends,

I hope you and your loved ones are healthy and doing well.

While 2021 offered hope for a recovery from the COVID pandemic, numerous challenges and obstacles have persisted for many throughout the world, including the men, women and children in the countries where we operate.

But you have stood by us, enabling us to keep our mission on track.

Your generosity has supported free cataract surgeries, vision screenings, ophthalmic training and so much more. You also have enabled us to kick-start our exciting new Aadya Initiative (**see page 2 for details**).

Over the summer, you took part in our CBI Birthday Celebration, and you joined our recent World Sight Day event to expand our impact.

We are incredibly grateful for your commitment to our cause.

As 2021 comes to a close, we have a new opportunity to transform others' lives. Thanks to matching gifts from a strong CBI supporter and our Board members, you can help twice as many people conquer vision loss.

Your gift can enable parents to support their families and it can open doors to a lifetime of opportunities for children. Your support also can empower women through education.

We hope you will end the year by giving the gift of sight. I wish you peace, happiness and good health in the coming year.

With gratitude,

Reena Chandra Rajpal, MPH
President & Executive Director

AADYA: REACHING MORE PEOPLE, SCALING UP

Combat Blindness International is building on the success of an important initiative to expand access to eye care in remote areas.

It is called the Aadya Initiative, a rebranded and more robust version of Shakti, which we launched in early 2021, in collaboration with Dr. Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital (SCEH) in Delhi, India, and students in the University of Wisconsin–Whitewater's chapter of Enactus, a global social entrepreneurship group.

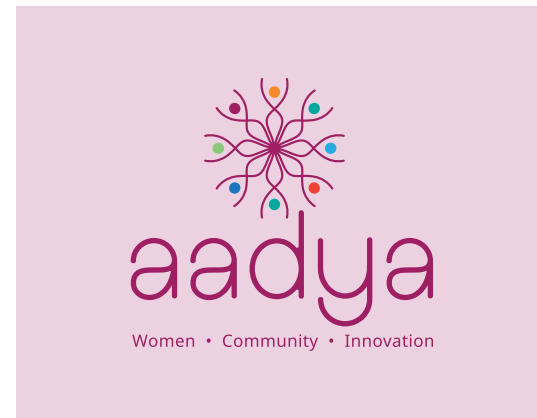
Like its predecessor, the Aadya Initiative delivers much-needed eye care to people in rural areas via teams of skilled women vision screeners.

This initiative addresses the desperate shortage of eye health technicians in low-income rural areas. By training a workforce of women technicians to conduct door-to-door vision screenings with mobile technology, we are overcoming that barrier. And, at the same time, we are promoting gender equity in these regions by empowering women with screening skills, income and employment. It's a win-win!

"In the Shakti pilot earlier this year, we proved that our self-sustaining model could deliver decisive results — over 2,800 were screened, along with hundreds of referrals and eyeglasses dispensed on the spot — in only a couple of weeks," says Reena Chandra Rajpal, CBI's executive director.



The Aadya Initiative promotes access to eye health and empowers women.



Since then, CBI staff and Board members have worked closely with the Shroff team and UW–Whitewater Enactus students to optimize and expand the program.

"Our friend Kovin Naidoo, a true global eye health visionary who spoke at World Sight Day, challenged us to expand the 'reach' and 'scale' of the Aadya Initiative," Reena notes. "In other words, **reaching** underserved children and adults where they live, and **scaling up** our self-sustaining program to cover large geographic areas."

CBI, the Shroff team and the UW–Whitewater students developed an enhanced program, including:

- a refined training curriculum;
- a longer screening period;
- a larger group of trained vision screeners;
- a much larger screening coverage area; and
- an updated version of our custom-built smartphone screening survey.

Fittingly, the first wave of Aadya vision screeners began the new phase of screenings on October 14th, World Sight Day.

Stay tuned for more exciting news about the Aadya Initiative in the future!

GIVING SIGHT, RESTORING INDEPENDENCE

Before her eyesight began to fail, Beatrice was an industrious farm worker in Kenya. But vision loss caused her to be dependent on others, and she had to stop working. Eventually, Beatrice's grandchild had to drop out of school to take care of her. Unable to pay for eye surgery, her future looked uncertain.

Fortunately, Beatrice received CBI-supported eye surgery at Lions SightFirst Eye Hospital, our partner in Nairobi. "That's how I got my sight back," she exclaimed. When you give to CBI, you're restoring the independence of patients — and those who care for them.



Your generosity restored Beatrice's vision.

WORLD SIGHT DAY = VISION FOR THOUSANDS

Thanks to you, we exceeded our 2021 World Sight Day goal! CBI raised over \$117,000, which includes a generous matching gift from our dear friend, Diane Ballweg.

The Oct. 14th livestreamed event included updates on our impact, a fun silent auction, and an interview with Kovin Naidoo, a global eye health thought leader and senior vice president of social impact at Essilor, a world leader in ophthalmic products.

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



Watch a recording of our World Sight Day livestream at combatblindness.org/world-sight-day.



There was a good turnout at the CBI-supported World Sight Day Right to Sight Clinic, spearheaded by Dr. Anna Momont of the UW–Madison Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences (DOVS). In one day, a total of 66 underinsured patients received free eye care, thanks to your generosity. Huge thanks to Dr. Momont and the DOVS team!



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Happy Holidays!



CBI and the Jayapriya Medical Foundation in Hubli, India, have once again collaborated on providing free cataract surgeries to 1,000 people. We've also supported free cataract surgery lenses for Nav Bharat Jagriti Kendra in Hazaribag, India, and for Shri Jalaram Arogya Seva Trust Hospital in Meghraj, India. Read our next newsletter for updates on these and other projects made possible by your support.

GIFT IDEA: CBI T-SHIRTS

CBI T-shirts make great holiday gifts!

Get your T-shirts in time for the holidays
by ordering before Nov. 30 at:

inktothepeople.com/combat-blindness-international.

