

Program Overview



Established:

2007

Area of Operation:

- Bangladesh (countrywide)
- India (Dhenkanal, Jajpur, Kendrapara and Angul)
- Nepal (countrywide)

Implementing Partners:

- Rights & Sight for Children (Bangladesh)
- NYSASDRI & Kalinga Eye Hospital (India)
- Nepal Netra Jyoti Sangh (Nepal)

The Need for Eye Care: Worldwide

- 285 million people are visually impaired worldwide; 19 million are children under 15
- The three main causes of visual impairment in children are uncorrected refractive error (63%), cataracts (23%), and glaucoma (2%)
- 80% of visual impairment in children is preventable or treatable. Delayed intervention for refractive error and low vision leads to blindness
- There are nearly 45 million blind people worldwide
- 500,000 children become blind every year
- 50% of children who become blind die within one year
- Blindness in children damages psychomotor, social, & emotional development and inhibits opportunities for education, employment, and community participation.



The Need for Eye Care: Focus Countries

Visual Impairment in Bangladesh

- 750,000 adults and 40,000 children are blind in Bangladesh
- 27,250 adults and 9,925 children per million have refractive error
- 550,000 are blind from cataracts
- There are only 820 ophthalmologists and 268 mid-level eye care personnel providing eye care services and 90% of all doctors and healthcare providers are urban based

Visual Impairment in India

- There are an estimated 2 million blind children in India, most with easily treatable cataracts or refractive errors
- There is only 1 ophthalmologist per 250,000 rural people in India
- 62.6% of blindness in Indian children is due to cataracts
- India has 23.5% of the world's blind children

Visual Impairment in Nepal

- There are about 4,300 blind children in Nepal
- 23% of blind children do not receive surgery. 15% of blind are unaware of treatment.



Program Objectives

- Make vision care accessible to all
- Arrange eye screenings for underprivileged children and families
- Provide treatment for visual impairment, especially refractive error and cataracts
- Promote community awareness and education on eye health: nutritional guidance, self-diagnosis, access to resources for visually impaired.
- Train local doctors and arrange volunteer services from US doctors



How the Program Works



Eye Screening Camps

Each year DCI arranges free eye screening camps for underprivileged people of all ages in our rural projects areas and at supported schools and orphanages. Camps are publicized in advance in the surrounding area and doctors and optometrist from partner hospitals travel to administer the camps. Patients with vision problems are identified, provided medication and brought to partner hospitals for more thorough examinations and treatment. Visually disabled people are referred to supporting organizations.



Cataract Surgery

DCI arranges surgery for pediatric and adult patients diagnosed with cataracts provided by our partner hospitals. In India we partner with KEHRC (Kalinga Eye Hospital & Research Center), a unit of NYSASDRI (National Youth Service Action & Social Development) in Dhenkanal, Orissa and in Bangladesh with Ispahani Eye Hospital, BIRDEM and several private clinicians.

How the Program Works



Eyeglasses

Refractive error is the primary cause of childhood visual impairment in Bangladesh. It is a serious barrier for children's development and directly results in decreased school attendance. Early detection and treatment with glasses or surgery is vital to ensure a child's normal development. DCI organizes screenings in schools and projects locations to identify children with refractive error and provide free eyeglasses.



Awareness Building

The populations DCI serves lack understanding of the importance of vitamins and recognition of the symptoms of eye diseases. As a result, diseases can progress from treatable conditions to permanent blindness. As preventive measures DCI:

- Arranges classes for women and adolescent girls
- Distributes seeds and plants for homestead gardens as a source of vitamins
- Establishes resource centers with information on eye health

Our Achievements

32,000+ eye screenings conducted

5,000+ surgeries performed

100 primary ophthalmologists trained in pediatric cataract surgery

11,000+ glasses provided

800 families have received seeds, plants, and fertilizer for homestead gardens as a source of vitamins



2015