Sightsavers Comprehensive Eye Care in Sierra Leone Project

Impact made by the project
The project contributed to a reduction in avoidable blindness and vision impairment in Sierra Leone through country wide provision of comprehensive eye care (CEC) services, targeting over 2,300,000 people over 5 years.

Sustainability
A key impact of the project is the integration of eye care into primary eye care delivery. This is crucial for sustainability - there is now increased capacity to deliver quality eye care services across the health system. Access to eye care has improved for the population at large, including for poor and remote populations.

Local Standard Chartered engagement
The project received good quality engagement from the Bank staff. For example during World Sight Day activities Bank staff volunteered by registering patients and helping with sensitization whilst eye care staff provided free screening at the banking hall.

Main objectives for the project:
- Support National Eye Health Project (NEHP) to strengthen health systems through improved human resources for eye health, including the training and deployment of required eye care professionals.
- Effectively integrate PEC services into PHC through support to Peripheral Health Unit (PHU) staff.
- Develop and improve community participation in preventive eye health activities, particularly in underserved and marginalised communities.
- Reduce vitamin A deficiency-associated blindness and mortality by ensuring high and sustained Vitamin A Supplementation (VAS) for children.

Provision of comprehensive eye care services

SiB contributed towards...

SiB contributed towards the training of 1 Ophthalmologist, 1 Optometrist, 31 (1 deceased and two to complete in July 2019) Ophthalmic nurses, 24 Ophthalmic Community health Officers, 3 instrument technicians 3 in management 2 theatre nurses and 4,058 PHU staff

SiB contributed towards the provision of specialized equipment and drugs. The project also supported distribution of Ivermectin, Albendazole and Vitamin A to facilities in all the fourteen districts

SiB contributed to the development and printing of 600 IEC materials, brochure, fact sheets and jingles

Leading to...

Leading to an increase in number of professional staff and eye care workers trained resulting in the total of 681,226 persons seen and treated. This included 10,410 adult cataract and 169 child cataract surgeries.

Leading to enhanced medical technology and drugs for quality eye care services. Increased 100% geographic and 78% and 80% therapeutic coverages for Oncho and LF respectively

Vitamin A: The project helped reach the target population of 1.3 children under five years across the country leading to high coverage rates of 87%.

Leading to increased sensitization eye care issues all over the country

Therefore impacting...

Therefore impacting on the availability of more professional eye care services provided at base and outreaches, thereby bringing eye care to the doorstep of communities and also contributed towards integration of primary eye care into primary health care

Therefore impacting the availability of quality eye care and NTD services and support the free health care initiative for vulnerable persons like women and persons with disabilities

Therefore impacting on knowledge of access to eye care services
SiB contributed towards...

SiB contributed to 86,604 refractions, 11,501 glasses dispensed and 491 low vision devices dispensed.

Leading to...

Leading to improvement in vision and resumption to normal life.

Therefore impacting on the reduction of avoidable blindness.

SiB contributed towards the construction of the ophthalmic Clinical Department in the Department of Community Allied Sciences in Njala University in Bo. And the construction of an Optical display centre at the Lowell and Ruth Guess Eye department in Freetown.

Leading to graduation at the University of the first set of 24 ophthalmic community health officers. The Optical shop increased marketing for spectacles at the facility.

Therefore impacting on the availability of professionals at community level. Thus bringing eye care to the doorstep of communities.

Key service delivery increase

52% No of glasses dispensed to women within the project period

95% No of persons seen and treated over the five years

SiB Project

Implementing partner: National Eye Health Programme; Eastern Province Eye Care Project; Southern Province Eye Care Project; Western Area Eye Care Project; National NTD/Oncho Programme; CBM; HKI

Total budget: $1,250,172
Total SiB contribution: $1,000,138
Project Duration: 5 years

Name: Memunatu Kamara
Age: 23 years
Location: Magburaka, Northern Province

Memunatu studies nursing at the Massanga School of Nursing in Magburaka. She visited the Optical Unit in Department of Ophthalmology Connaught Hospital in Freetown accompanied by her father where she complained about difficulty in reading with associated eye pain and tearing. During her comprehensive eye examination and refraction her binocular vision was also assessed by the optometrist. It was discovered that she had significant issues with her sight. For example, unaided vision was 6/6 (20/20) in right and left. Unaided near vision however was reduced (N14 at 40cm) with remarkable convergence ability. Ocular motility was smooth and accurate. She was counselled to understand her diagnosis. Her father bought 2 pairs of the Vision Spring readymade readers since they were within his budget. The optical team also decided to issue one out on gratis. Young Memunatu left very pleased and well satisfied with treatment.