

CHILD EYE HEALTH REPORT

Sava Region, Madagascar

2ND QUARTER 2013

Our general objective is to raise public awareness on avoidable childhood blindness and the utilization of eye service delivery for children under 16. Specifically, activities have been aimed at enabling eye care centers to control congenital cataract as early as possible, and to detect vision or life threatening problems such as ophthalmia neonatorum, congenital glaucoma, and retinoblastoma.

Activities that have been conducted include a radio announcement regarding child eye health education, the training of existing community health workers, the training of the CSB officers on recognizing children with visual problems, the acquiring of T-shirts for child eye health promotion, as well as posters, a one-day eye screening camp in two districts, and cataract surgeries.

Key achievements this quarter include the following:

- 26 community health workers have been trained as key informants, to inform and aid parents with visually impaired children.
- 13 individuals who are responsible for the Primary Eye Care Centre (CSB) have been trained about child eye health problem.

Cataract surgeries carried out on children under 16 at Salfa Eye Clinic:

SALFA CATARACT SURGERIES 2013

DATE	NAME	AGE	SEX	OPERATED EYE	DiSTRiCT
27/03/2013	Zertride	14	F	Both	ANTALAHA
27/03/2013	ARLEN	16	M	Both	ANTALAHA
28/03/2013	SANDRIN	6	M	Both	ANTALAHA
23/04/2013	RAKOTONIRINA JULIET	13	M	Both	ANTALAHA
02/05/2013	MAHAVITRIKA DONAD	9	M	Both	ANTALAHA
02/05/2013	MAHAVITRIKA DONICE	9	M	Both	ANTALAHA
15/05/2013	AIME	12	M	Both	SAMBAVA
04/06/2013	NJAKAMANANA ELIDIO	4	M	Both	ANTSOHIHY
18/06/2013	SENOT	12	M	Left	ANDAPA

We've noticed an increasing number of children receiving cataract operation during the last 3 years at the SALFA Hospital in Sambava: 5 in 2011, 6 in 2012 and 17 in 2013 up to June.

All of the surgeries have been based at the hospital in Sambava, and the children have been discharged after optical correction. Furthermore, all children who received operation for cataract received spectacles; a total of eleven pairs of spectacles have been distributed. During their stay at the hospital, children and parents received remuneration for food as part of their participation in the program. Transportation, spectacles, and medicine were also offered free of charge.

Story of Gertride and Sandrin

Rason Maurice and Francine Tamary, parents of Gertride, noticed that their daughter had begun to develop a visual problem at age one and a half. They thought about bringing Gertride to the hospital many times, but the people around them said that doctors would not be able to treat such a problem, suggesting instead that they seek out traditional healers. They took their daughter to a nutrition community worker, but “they just gave us vitamin(s) and nothing happened.”

By age 6, Gertride had to leave school because of her serious visual impairment. When the parents noticed that Gertride’s youngest brother Sandrin was having the same problem within the first year of his life, they assumed he would go through the same experience as Gertride. “After all that history,” said Rason, “I believed it was witchery against my two kids.”

No eye health worker had visited their commune before, but Rason remembered that on the 16th of March, 2013, a VISION 2020 team from Sambava had come to the commune of Antombana and the doctor had said this was congenital cataract. Gertride was now 14 and Sandrin, 6. Convinced by the counselor during outreach, he made sure the family did not miss their appointment for surgery on 25 March, 2013.

“We were very happy when one Friday...[a] few days after surgeries, Gertride and Sandrin wanted to join me to go the market of Ambodisatrana, near the SALFA Hospital. They were able to see and walk alone. Gertride can make up a fish trap now. Sandrin can climb a guava tree and recognize ripe fruit.”

The children are now looking forward to attending school next year, alongside their other siblings.