

TOWARDS UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE IN GARISSA COUNTY, KENYA

CHEPs 88th Eye Camp

22nd – 26th July 2019

Dadaab Refugee Camp, Garissa County, Kenya

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Acknowledgement

We are grateful to Hayrat Aid and Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) for sponsoring this camp and also for the support extended by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Medicins Sans Frontieres (MSF). The support went a long way in providing much needed ophthalmic services to the needy people of Dadaab Refugee Camp and its host community, Garissa County and Kenya at large, thereby correcting their vision and empowering them. We look forward to more collaboration in future.

Introduction

It is alarming that 282 million people worldwide have abnormal vision and 14% of them are completely blind. Also of concern is the fact that 90% of visually impaired people live in low-income settings. Vision impairment can create great difficulty among people and limit opportunities in education, employment and social engagement. It contributes greatly to lost productivity and poverty among communities. Many eye health problems can be prevented and treatments are among the most successful and cost-effective of all health interventions provided the intervention is timely. Major causes of visual impairment include: refractive error; age-related macular degeneration; cataract; diabetic retinopathy and glaucoma.

CHEPs is on a mission to improve the eye sight of needy communities and prevent blindness among them. We do so by conducting eye camps, to examine them, conduct tests, and treat their eye diseases thereby preventing progression to blindness as well as provide them with spectacles to improve their vision. We also provide surgeries to restore vision among reversibly blind people such as cataract patients, as well as surgeries aimed at preventing blindness such as patients suffering glaucoma, which leads to irreversible blindness.

We have so far conducted 86 eye camps in low-income setups across Kenya providing services to more than 36,400 needy people. We have treated over 26,006 of them with various eye medications, and providing over 12,001 of them with spectacles. We have also operated over 3,987 cataract blind people to restore vision.

Our 88th eye camp was held in Dadaab, Garissa County which is 477km from Nairobi. Patients came from very distant villages, many appearing weak and malnourished.

The eye camp

The team held the camp at the IRC and MSF Hospital to provide the much needed ophthalmic surgical services. The camp was preceded by Mobilization and pre-screening since the 1st day of July 2019 and the camp came to an end on the 26th day of July with over 5000 having been seen within this period. The team also conducted **272 cataract surgeries**, **5 pterygium excision**, **3 tarsal plate rotations**, **2 chalazions and 2 corneal scrapping**.

On follow up, all surgeries were successful with vision restored in the patients. No complications have been reported, and all the beneficiaries have expressed heartfelt gratitude. Most of them were elderly, who had lived in a state of blindness for many years, but could not access treatment due to financial constraints.



Map of Kenya showing location of Dadaab, Garissa County

`Photo gallery



The team arriving at IRC Hospital

Patients waiting at the lounge



Patients being examined



Administering anesthesia



Performing the surgeries







Post operation







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