

CHILD BLINDNESS

USAID's investments in child blindness advance the global knowledge base on best practices and innovative approaches for pediatric eye care programs in low- and middle-income countries and demonstrate best practices for increasing the number of children provided with quality vision-saving eye care services.



Photo: Christopher G. K. Pearson, Child Blindness Program

ADVANCING EYE HEALTH FOR CHILDREN WORLDWIDE

In low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) millions of children lack the necessary visual aids, services, or surgeries to help them participate in typical and important childhood activities such as education, reading, and play. When a child suffers from impaired vision or goes blind, their physical and intellectual development may be affected and their income potential reduced. This brings additional negative impacts on their family and community.

USAID prevents and treats blindness by training health workers on quality eye health service provision. The Agency's Child Blindness Program (CBP) has restored sight or provided eyeglasses to nearly 100,000 children in the poorest communities of the world. Since 1991, this program has made eye care possible for over seven million children.



Approximately 1.5 million children are blind worldwide and many of these children are in countries that lack services, aid, or surgery to detect and correct visual impairments.



More than half of blind children are girls, who are disproportionately affected by vision problems due to a lack of access to corrective services.



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PRIORITIES FOR USAID'S CHILD BLINDNESS PROGRAM

USAID's Child Blindness Program is oriented around two main components: 1) increase the number of children provided with quality sight-saving eye health services and 2) advance the global knowledge base on best practices and innovative approaches for pediatric eye health programs.

To date, USAID has awarded **approximately \$11.4 million to 31 eye care and health NGOs**, achieving the following:



Screened an estimated **1.7 million children** globally for visual impairment.



Trained an estimated **23,000 health providers, community members, and NGO partners** on eye health service provision.



Provided eyeglasses, eye surgery, and low vision or rehabilitation services to an estimated **95,000 children**.

HOW DOES USAID SUPPORT EYE HEALTH



Build the capacity of ophthalmologist, optometrist, nurses, and other health care professionals to effectively screen and treat children for eye conditions



Equip health facilities with specialized equipment and supplies to provide quality diagnostic and surgical interventions



Facilitate cross-sectoral collaboration among health facilities and health care professionals to promote relationship building for sustainable eye health programming



Support health care professionals to test innovative technology and tools for expanding outreach to communities in need, improving diagnosis of eye conditions, and enhancing communications with patients and families



Work with health care professionals and researchers to document evidence-based approaches to eye health service delivery to advance global knowledge and learning

► [Learn more at USAID.gov/childblindness](https://www.usaid.gov/childblindness)

