

REPORT ON CATARACT CAMP  
AT ESSAU SECONDARY EYE UNIT  
COURTESY OF *CATARACTS ARE CURABLE.*



Prepared by: **Mr. Mustapha Jagne (POMA)**

**Essau District Hospital.**

**Date: 04<sup>th</sup> /October / 2020.**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Let me take this opportunity to extend my sincere appreciation to **CATARACTS ARE CURABLE** for their immense contribution. **'Cataracts Are Curable'** is solely responsible of financing these operations in which 50 patients were operated upon. The people of North Bank West Region are grateful you for the contributions you made in their lives. Cataracts Are Curable have touched their hearts by restoring their autonomy and dignity. My special thanks go to Mr Alasana Touray, for his role in facilitating the camps. Let me also acknowledge the support of our able National Eye Health Programme manager (NEHP) Mr. Sarjo Kanyi.

## **INTRODUCTION**

This is a report on the Cataract Camp in North Bank West Regional (NBW/R) at Essau District Hospital in August 2020 in which 50 patients were operated upon. These patients were sponsored by **Cataracts Are Curable**; the camp was highly successful in terms of turn out and visual outcome. This has definitely impacted positively on the lives and livelihood of the beneficiaries and their families; therefore it's a step in the right direction.

This report highlights the the statistic of surgeries, visual outcome and all the activities we have carried out during the camp including post operative reviews.

There are also challenges we are faced with and recommendation.

## ACTIVITIES

As the Principal Ophthalmic Medical Assistant (POMA) in charge of North Bank West Region, my main aim is how to take eye care services to the door steps of the communities. Thus, many people will take up eye care services and realize the benefits instead of going for traditional eye medicine of which there is unsubstantiated claim by traditional healer.

There were individuals with mature cataracts in the register waiting simply because they can't afford the cost of cataract surgery and post operatives drugs. Therefore they had wait for quite a while before **Cataract Are Curable** comes their way.

The total number of patients seen with mature cataract was 83, we were able to operate on 50 patients based on the package. We also saw 22 patients that had Mature Cataract but had also Glaucoma, they were not operated upon but referred to the tertiary hospital in Kanifing. Glaucoma is on the increase here in the Gambia and there is nothing much we can do at our level here in Essau.

I am happy to report that all the 50 patients sponsored by *Cataract Are Curable* were operated successfully by my humble self.

The surgeries started on the 11<sup>th</sup> August 2020, it was done in batches on alternate days; my team was very committed during this busy period of volume surgery coupled with the Covid-19 restrictions. 3 to 5 patients were operated on each surgery day and by the 30<sup>th</sup> September all the 50 patients were operation. These patients were health educated, given appointment dates and discharged the following morning after all protocols were observed.

Using the WHO definition of blindness, 10 patients out of the 50 patients operated were blind solely as a result of Cataracts.

The table below shows the particulars of the patients operated upon, their vision before the surgeries on both eyes and their vision in the operated eyes after 2 weeks.

**THE 50 PATIENTS BENEFITED FROM FREE CATARACT CAMP SURGERY: 11<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST -30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER,2020.**

<b>NAMES</b>	<b>ADDRESS</b>	<b>VA-RE</b>	<b>VA-LE</b>	<b>EYE OPERATED</b>	<b>POST OPT.VA After 2 weeks</b>
<b>1 OMAR JADAMA</b>	ESSAU	6/6	HM	LE	6/6
<b>2 SATOU JOBE</b>	KERR ARDO	6/18	HM	LE	6/9
<b>3 ALHAGIE CHORR</b>	BARRA	HM	CF	RE (Cataract blind)	6/12
<b>4 ABDOU KAH</b>	MAYAMBA	HM	2/60	RE (Cataract blind)	6/12
<b>5 KEBBA CEESAY</b>	SAMBA KALLA	CF	CF	RE (Cataract blind)	6/18
<b>6 KADDY SENGHORE</b>	ESSAU	6/12	HM	LE	6/18
<b>7 OUMIE NJIE</b>	ESSAU	2/60	HM	LE (Cataract blind)	6/12
<b>8 FATOU JAMMEH</b>	LEWNA	3/60	6/9	RE	6/18
<b>9 NUHA BAH</b>	SAMI	HM	6/36	RE	6/9

<b>10 ISATOU TOURAY</b>	MEDINA SERIGNE MASS	6/24	3/60	LE	6/18
<b>11 ADAM SECKA</b>	CHESSEY	PL	HM	RE ( <b>Cataract blind</b> )	6/12
<b>12 AMIE MBOOB</b>	KERR AMADOU	HM	6/36	RE	6/12
<b>13 KADDY JOBE</b>	ESSAU	5/60	HM	LE	6/9
<b>14 OUSMAN CHOI</b>	FASS NJAGA CHOI	HM	6/36	RE	6/12
<b>15 FATOU SOWE</b>	KERR CHERNO	6/60	1/60	LE	6/18
<b>16 AMADOU BAH</b>	FASS NJAGA CHOI	CF	PL	RE	6/18
<b>17 HADDY JAWO</b>	MAYAMBA	CF	5/60	RE	6/18
<b>18 ISATOU JALLOW</b>	ESSAU	HM	6/18	RE	6/24
<b>19 AMIE BAH</b>	KERR JARGA	6/12	3/60	LE	6/18
<b>20 SAI JOBE</b>	ESSAU	HM	6/24	RE	6/18
<b>21 LAMIN SAIDY</b>	ESSAU	2/60	6/36	RE	6/12
<b>22 MARIAMA JAH</b>	KUNTAIR	6/60	2/60	LE	6/24
<b>23 JABOU JOOF</b>	NJONGON	CF	6/36	RE	6/9
<b>24 MODOU SARR</b>	NEMA KUTA	HM	3/60	RE ( <b>Cataract blind</b> )	6/18
<b>25 BAKARY JAITEH</b>	ESSAU	HM	6/24	RE	6/18

<b>26 ABLIE KHAN</b>	KUNTAIR	HM	PL	RE (Cataract blind)	6/18
<b>27 SERA MANNEH</b>	BUNIADU	HM	6/36	RE	6/12
<b>28 MOMODOU SOWE</b>	MBOLLET	6/60	2/60	LE	6/9
<b>29 BABA NJIE</b>	ESSAU	HM	6/60	RE	6/12
<b>30 NJIE FAYE</b>	BARRA	6/60	1/60	LE	6/24
<b>31 EBRIMA SONKO</b>	TUBAKOLONG	3/60	3/60	LE (Cataract blind)	6/12
<b>32 ALIEU BAH</b>	KANUMA	CF	6/24	RE	6/18
<b>33 ALAGIE TOURAY</b>	TOUBA ANG.	PL	PL	LE (Cataract blind)	6/18
<b>34 AMAT CEESAY</b>	MEDINA	PL	6/24	RE	6/9
<b>35 BABOUCAR MBOWE</b>	KERR JARGA	1/60	6/36	RE	6/12
<b>36 LAMIN CEEAY</b>	ESSAU	3/60	6/12	RE	6/36
<b>37 JABOU NJIE</b>	PAKAU SALOUM	HM	6/60	RE	6/36
<b>38 AWA CEESAY</b>	AMDALAI	PL	HM	RE (Cataract blind)	6/18
<b>39 AWA JOBE</b>	SAMI	HM	6/24	LE	6/18
<b>40 DEMBA SARR</b>	BARRA	PL	2/60	RE	6/12
<b>41 DEMBA GASSAMA</b>	SIKA	6\12	2\60	LE	6/9
<b>42 ALMAMMY MANNEH</b>	ALBREDA	6/60	1/60	LE	6/18



<b>43 SAINABOU SAINÉ</b>	BARRA	PL	6/36	RE	6/18
<b>44 VINCENT GOMEZ</b>	NEMA	HM	HM	LE	6/18
<b>45 JOHN BASS</b>	ALBREDA	PL	6\36	RE	6/12
<b>46 ABLIE SAINÉ</b>	MBANTA	3/60	CF	LE	6/24
<b>47 LAMIN JABANG</b>	MBANKAM	6/18	PL	LE	6/18
<b>48 FATOU JABBIE</b>	BRENDING	6/24	3/60	LE	6/12
<b>49 NAFFIE FOFANA</b>	DARSILAMEH	6/24	3/60	LE	6/9
<b>50 BANNA SARJO</b>	BAKIDICK	3/60	5/60	RE	6/12

**KEY:** VA =VISUAL ACUITY, RE = RIGHT EYE, LE = LEFT EYE, HM = HAND MOVEMENT, CF = COUNTING FINGERS HALF METER, PL = PERCEPTION TO LIGHT & **POST OPT** = POST OPERATION

Note: Just 2 weeks after surgery, **43** patients had **Good Vision**, 7 patients **Borderline Vision** and there is no **Poor Vision**

## **PERSONAL STATEMENT**

*Cataract Are Curable* without any doubt made difference in North Bank West Region as far as reducing the Cataract backlog and resorting sight of patients is concerned. Without *Cataract Are Curable* these poor patients would have still been blind as result of one of the preventable causes of blindness. Cataracts continues to pose a big challenge to people of North Bank West Region whose disadvantaged individuals and families bear the brunt of this condition.

Let me at this point restate that we are determined to take eye care services to the doorstep of individuals and communities in the region. However, this is hampered by the lack of mobility nowadays. The only option avail to us is the registration of individuals seen at clinic level but can't afford the cost of surgery. Let me reiterate that there more cases in the community that are not coming forward unless we are able meet them in their communities and counsels them. This is as a result of fear factor and other can't afford the cost of transportation to and from Essau District Hospital for consultations.

*Cataract Are Curable* sponsored camps is increasing the Cataract surgical uptake in the region thereby uplifting our own performance as surgeons. There is without doubt enough evidence to back this claim because in 2015 there were 146 cases of Cataract operated compared to 61 cases in 2014, 89 cases in 2013 and 100 cases in 2012. However, without sponsored camp the total surgeries in 2015 would have been less than 100 cases when actually there are people living with Cataract and blindness as a result of poverty. The highest figure of 248 cases in 2011 was because there were two free camps that year. I am quite sure that without the COVID-19 restrictions our cataract surgery uptake would have been more than that of 2019 because of the *Cataract Are Curable* sponsored camp. I have been in this region for over 10 years now and I am sure that there are many cataract patients in the region but there the need scientific evidence or research based evidence to substantiate these assumptions.

North Bank West Region comprised of Lower Nuimi, Upper Nuimi and Jokadou with a Total population of **110970** according 2013 census preliminary results. A survey on the prevalence of eye conditions or Cataract is of great importance if we are to answer some of the questions commonly being raised.

When you take a close look at the second graph which compares 2014/2015 surgeries, one may be tempted to say that the values defer. This may be attributed to the 50 patients operated in October resulting from free camp

and what is difficult to accept is that most of them have no choice other than to wait for a free surgery. Some may have been waiting for the past three years or more and there are still others in the community waiting for a similar opportunity to be operated.

Cataract in most cases affects the old, as a Cataract Surgeon I am mandated to operate patients 50 years and above, young people with Cataract should be referred to the Consultant Ophthalmologist tertiary Centre.

As I said earlier using the WHO definition of blindness, 10 patients out of the 50 patients operated were blind solely as a result of Cataracts. In simple terms 10 out of the 50 patients could not see enough to carry out their daily activities, they depend entirely on other family members for all their needs. Let me emphasize that 90 percent of their needs are taken care of by a young member of their family, who is more often than not a child that is supposed to be in school. In our society the burden of escorting the blind person lays on children, a child that should be in school to shape his or her future and thus reduce poverty in their family. Therefore ***Cataract Are Curable*** has set 10 children free from this unproductive responsibility that hinders nation building.

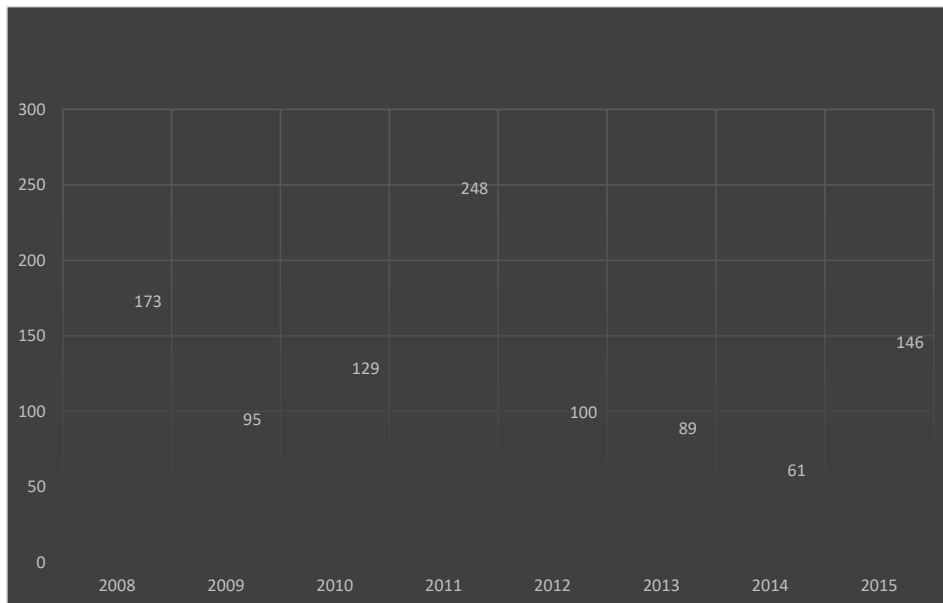
However there is still the need to operate their other eyes and without any financial assistance some can't foot the bill to be operated and will continue see only in one eye.



This is a 65yrs old lady who was escorted to my clinic by a 7yrs old boy. The Lady was Cataract Blind and was relying on this Young boy for her movement day in day out. So *Cataract Are Curable* has set this poor boy free by restoring the sight of this Lady.

Finally, in our health services delivery, accessibility, equity and affordability are issues relevant to our working environment, without *Cataract Are Curable* continuous support, affordability and accessibility would seriously continue to affect services delivery particularly in the area of Cataract Surgery

## Graph Showing Cataract Surgeries from 2008 to 2015



This graph is to show that the high surgical uptake in this region is always as a result of free surgery and the trend is the same with most recent data (2016 -2019).

## **CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**

1. The most common challenge we are faced with is, coming across elderly people with mature Cataract seeking for surgery but unfortunately we can't operate only because of cost. It will be of paramount importance if this assistance from *Cataract Are Curable* continues to flow, as the graphs above indicate an increase in Cataract surgical uptake whenever the burden of cost is taken care of.
2. There is no vehicle nowadays, thus affecting services. We are appealing to *Cataract Are Curable* to help us with a double cabin pick-up vehicle.

**CC: Program Manager - NECP**

**File**