



**Ministry of Health**  
**NATIONAL EYE HEALTH PROGRAMME**

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1<sup>st</sup> November 2022

**EYE SCREENING REPORT CONDUCTED IN THE FONI BY THE EYE UNIT OF**  
**BWIAM GENERAL HOSPITAL IN OCTOBER 2022.**

Bwiam secondary eye unit through the NEHP has reach out to partners {an organisation called **Cataracts Are Curable**} submitted a request for funds to conduct community screening for patients with special emphasis on cataracts and other major eye conditions within the five district of Foni. The activity was implemented after receiving the funds from NEHP secretariat which had been donated by **Cataracts Are Curable**.



**Mr. Abdoulie Touray POMA/Cataract Surgeon and his able team in the villages**

The activities started with community awareness, the use of the community radio station in Bwiam, and also the use of Traditional communicators which include local women who use their platform to spread eye health message. This has resulted in many people responding to our call by traveling distances to the various screening centres across the five districts of Foni. Some had to use Horse/Donkey Cards to ferry patients to the screening centres. The screenings were conducted from morning to the late afternoons so as to cover as many communities as possible per day.



### **Community Screening at Sibanorr WEC Clinic**

In total, fourteen communities were screened in seven different days and over five hundred people were seen during the visits. Out of this figure, seventy five of them had cataracts that needed surgical intervention while the rest had other eye ailments were given treatment and children were referred to SZRECC for Ophthalmologist review and management.

During the course of the exercise, all those who needed medications during the screening were given medications free of charge.



Community Screening in the Village

**Constraints:**

1. **Access:** to Eye Care Services, some patients are living in hard to reach areas which without our intervention would find it difficult to have Cataract operation.

2. **Affordability:** 85% of all those screened and diagnosed with mature cataract could not afford to pay for the services; what is more, post-operative drugs (e.g. a bottle of Maxitrol cost D250.00 which the majority cannot afford and besides there is no pharmacy to buy it. Patients have to travel to Kombos to get post-operative drugs.

**Mobility:** Eye Unit has no vehicle, instead the Eye Health team had to use one of the Ambulances to able to conduct screening in all the villages.

**Lack of Awareness:** Despite have a functioning eye unit in Bwiam , in some community do not understand that Cataract operations are conducted in Bwiam, those who will be operated will serve as Cataract motivators.

**Staffing:** The Surgeon is alone but with the intervention of NEHP and Bwiam Hospital Management team, Mr. Kemo Konteh, an Ophthalmic Medical Assistant who graduated at the ROTP and currently on internship will join the team to ensure a successful camp.

**Drugs:** There is no pharmacy in Foni, there are few outlets which have basic eye medications, therefore all medications and drugs have to be purchased in Banjul

Bwiam General Hospital through the eye unit would like to register our gratitude to the **NGO CATARACTS ARE CURABLE** through the **NEHP** secretariat and **Mr Alassana Touray** for sponsoring this screening activity.

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