Orbis India publishes a quarterly newsletter spotlighting Orbis’ activities and events, latest news from partner institutions, upcoming events and inspiring stories along the Orbis journey.

We welcome you to browse, read and share this!
Greetings from Orbis!

A year has passed by, and with it significant milestones have been achieved. I would like to congratulate all our partners who are engaged in the REACH program here in India for completing over 4.2 million screenings, an extraordinary achievement by any standard. And it doesn’t end there, last year we went live with REACH in Nepal too! It is extremely fulfilling for us at Orbis India to see the acceptance of the REACH model and its growth in such a short timespan.

Every year, on World Sight Day, we launch the Orbis comics and this year, in Bhopal, they were released by Professor (Dr.) Sangeeta Abrol, Deputy Director General (Ophthalmology), National Program for Control of Blindness and Visual Impairment, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. Thank you Ma’am!

The 2019 Orbis India Calendar is out and I would like to thank our partners whose photo entries have been showcased this year.

I wish you a very happy, healthy and successful 2019!

Dr. Rahul Ali
Country Director - India
Orbis
Orbis completes 20 years in Ethiopia

Orbis recently celebrated 20 years of changing lives in Ethiopia. During these years, nearly 25 million optical treatments were done, with 16 million being on adults and nearly 9 million on children. To mark this milestone, the Flying Eye Hospital (FEH) visited the country for the fifth time during World Sight Day and successfully completed a three-week program in Addis Ababa. A variety of activities - FEH tours, community visits, workshops, training sessions, social media campaign called ‘#WhyICare’ and the launch of the popular children’s book on refractive error, ‘The Singing Tree’ in Amharic, were organized during the three weeks. Milestones such as this help us reflect and see the impact our efforts have in the lives of individuals, families, communities and the eye health fraternity in countries that we work in! Kudos to Team Ethiopia!
An Orbis article in the Community Eye Health Journal

The Community Eye Health Journal showcased Orbis’s efforts in pediatric eye care in India in its South Asia edition on ‘Human Resources for eye health in South Asia’. Published on October 30, 2018, the article, titled ‘Paediatric eye care team: a comprehensive approach,’ authored by Dr. Rahul Ali, Country Director - India, speaks about the systematic approach that Orbis took to establish pediatric ophthalmology as a distinct sub-specialty in the Indian ophthalmic landscape. The article touches upon subjects such as comprehensive capacity building, developing the pediatric ophthalmology team and Orbis’s flagship program, India Childhood Blindness Initiative (ICBI) and much more. You can access the full article here: https://bit.ly/2TjgG6w
We were at the WISH Summit! Were you?

Orbis attended the World Innovation Summit for Health held at Doha which for the first time had a track on ‘Eye Health’! Around 2000 healthcare experts, policymakers, entrepreneurs and many others attended the summit to share and discuss innovative initiatives in the healthcare sector. The Orbis Flying Eye Hospital (FEH) also flew to Qatar to be part of the Health Care Week leading up to the WISH Summit. Multiple training workshops for ophthalmologists, medical students, nurses and paramedical staff were conducted along with tours of the FEH for guests from over 50 countries, seven embassies and 80 organizations. Two FEH simulator booths were exhibited – one at the summit and the other at the Hammad International Airport.
Orbis India Sandwich Fellowship Program

Orbis, in collaboration with Hasanuddin University Hospital (UNHAS), Indonesia has kickstarted its new one-year pediatric ophthalmology and strabismus sandwich fellowship program through its telemedicine platform, Cybersight. It is a blended learning program where the fellowship will be delivered in four rotations with each rotation consisting of three months. Rotation one and three will be through distance learning and surgical mentorship with fellowship candidates practicing at UNHAS and rotation two and four will be delivered at Dr. Shroff’s Charity Eye Hospital (SCEH) with direct hands-on training and skills transfer through wet labs and surgical cases. At present, the program is open for post-graduates in UNHAS. It is designed with an aim to provide quality training while reducing the time an ophthalmologist spends away from their facility.
REACH has reached new heights!

REACH (Refractive Error Among Children), Orbis’s school eye health program has crossed the Indian borders and reached its neighbouring country. Orbis along with its long term partner, Nepal Netra Jyoti Sangh launched REACH in Kathmandu on December 04, 2018. The formal launch was done by Upendra Yadav, Honorable Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Health, Nepal. The program will be implemented in Jhapa and Sunsari by Mechi Eye Hospital and Biratnagar Eye Hospital respectively. Over 4.2 million screenings have been completed in India in the last three years. With this expansion, over 400,000 school children in Nepal too will have access to quality eye health services.
How Orbis India celebrated World Sight Day!

Orbis launched the fourth in its series of comic books to mark World Sight Day. Professor (Dr.) Sangeeta Abrol, Deputy Director General (Ophthalmology), National Program for Control of Blindness and Visual Impairment, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, launched the comics in the presence of dignitaries from Sewa Sadan Eye Hospital, Bhopal, Vision 2020 India as well as eye hospitals and international non-profits working for eye care in India. The comics, published in English, Hindi and Bengali, are distributed free of cost along with the October edition of Diamond Comics as well as independently among school children by Orbis and its partners across India.
How our partners celebrated World Sight Day!

It is exciting to see how some of our partners decided to mark World Sight Day. Here is what some of our partners did to observe the day. Aravind Eye Hospital held an exhibition on food items for eye health in the pediatric clinic. They also displayed posters, model frames and lenses for children to see and learn. Sankara Nethralaya trained 125 Vision Ambassadors and tried to improve referrals to mark the day among other activities. Susrut Eye Foundation and Research Center held an awareness session on ‘eye health’ and a pediatric camp to mark the day at its vision centers in Diamond Harbor and Howrah. We are proud of our partners’ efforts in celebrating the day by engaging with the communities we work for.
Hospital Based Training Program at QRC

The Quality Resource Center (QRC) at Dr. Shroff’s Charity Eye Hospital (SCEH) had conducted a Hospital Based Training (HBT) to improve training processes at the center on December 21-22, 2018. The program was steered by Dr. Karl Golnik, Neuro-ophthalmologist at University of Cincinnati and Director for Education, International Council of Ophthalmology. Under the theme of “Evaluation of training assessment process and making the training processes more effective,” the HBT primarily focused on building capacity of the QRC team to develop competency based assessment rubrics for various trainings conducted at the center. This would enable them to train the members of quality assurance team from various eye care institutions.
The Orbis Calendar Contest winners are out!

It gives us immense pleasure to announce that the Orbis 2019 calendar is out! We would like to extend a big thank you to our partners for sharing their varied experiences in the field through the great photos. Orbis had started a calendar contest for its partners and staff in May 2018 for which we received great response and photos. We are happy to showcase the amazing pictures which highlight our collaborative efforts in the field! Additionally, we would also like to thank each and everyone for their entries.

Winning partner entries: Akhand Jyoti Eye Hospital, Aravind Eye Hospital, Kalinga Eye Hospital, Sankara Nethralaya, and Susrut Eye Foundation and Research Center.
Stories along the Orbis journey!

When Saravanaperumal went to Sankara Nethralaya, he asked the doctor, who was testing his eyes, a very innocent question, “You can see with only one eye. It is normal, right?” The child had cataract in his left eye since birth which remained overlooked and brought him to believe that everyone around him could see through only one eye. It even came as a shock to his parents that their child had cataract. In fact, it never occurred to them that children could have eye problems. The parents were counselled by the hospital team who also clarified that just because no one in the family had an eye problem, it did not mean that their children could not have one. Once convinced, his parents agreed for his surgery. The best part about the whole experience was that the child could finally see with both his eyes -for the first time!
Upcoming events

February 10 - 11, 2019
3rd International Swept Source OCT & Angiography Conference, Florida, USA

February 14 - 16, 2019
6th Evolving Practice of Ophthalmology Middle East Conference (EPOMET) 2019, Dubai, UAE

February 14 - 17, 2019
77th Annual Conference of the All India Ophthalmological Society (AIOS), Indore, India

February 15 - 17, 2019
23rd European Society of Cataract & Refractive Surgeons (ESCRS) Winter Meeting, Athens, Greece

February 21 - 23, 2019
5th Annual Congress on Controversies Ophthalmology: Asia Australia (COPHy AA), Shanghai, China

March 6 - 9, 2019
Asia-Pacific Academy of Ophthalmology (APAO) Congress 2019, Bangkok, Thailand

March 27 - 28, 2019
2nd Global Ophthalmology Summit, Amsterdam, Netherlands

March 27 - 30, 2019
World Glaucoma Congress 2019, Melbourne, Australia
Upcoming events

March 27 - 31, 2019
45th Annual Meeting of American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus (AAPOS), California, USA

March 28 - 29, 2019
East Asian Global Summit on Ophthalmology, Barcelona, Spain

April 12 - 14, 2019
70th Annual Delhi Ophthalmological Society (DOS) Conference, Delhi, India

April 18 - 19, 2019
28th International Conference on Insights in Ophthalmology, Rome, Italy

April 20 - May 02, 2019
Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) 2019 Annual Meeting, Vancouver, Canada

April 23 - 24, 2019
3rd World Congress on Eye and Vision, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

June 8 - 9, 2019
15th Annual Conference of Vision 2020:INDIA, Achieving Universal Eye Health for Everyone and Everywhere, Chennai, India

June 10 - 11, 2019
World Congress on Clinical, Pediatric and Neuro Ophthalmology, Perth, Australia
Orbis is a leading global non-governmental organization that brings people together to transform lives through the prevention and treatment of blindness. With our network of partners we mentor, train and inspire local teams to fight blindness so that they can save sight in their communities. In India, the focus is specially on children, where Orbis has established the world’s largest network of Children’s Eye Centers: 33 centers across 17 states.

When we can see, it can be easy to take our vision for granted. But giving vision to someone who doesn’t have it is life-changing. And we change lives!