



CNIB Foundation International Programs

Changing lives and smashing barriers worldwide



Making a world of difference, around the world

For more than 100 years, the CNIB Foundation has worked to level the playing field for Canadians with sight loss by delivering life-changing programs and powerful advocacy to people from coast to coast to coast.

But we're also a leader in matters concerning vision health and sight loss on the international stage. We partner with sight loss organizations around the globe, working with government and other non-profit organizations, sharing expertise and professional resources with people experiencing sight loss. We're also part of the global fight against poverty and illiteracy, and in support of human rights, for people who are blind in developing countries.

An important investment

It is critical that we work together to ensure that our international involvement and knowledge sharing continues to be successful. We can only accomplish this with your support.

Every year, CNIB invests more than \$1 million internationally to improve the lives of children and adults with sight loss, **but we need your help** to continue this vital work.

Cover Photo: Students and staff in front of
The Blessing School for the Visually Impaired in Rwanda.

An urgent global need

Worldwide,
more than
80 per cent



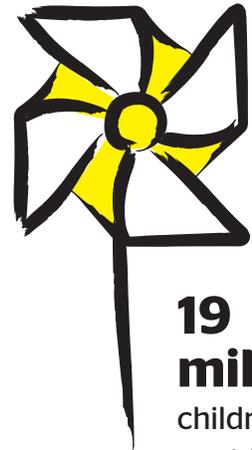
of sight loss

can be prevented or cured. But many people in developing countries don't have access to the medical care they need to help them avoid or treat blindness.

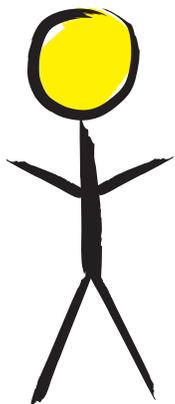
Around
253 million
people worldwide live
with sight loss;

36
MILLION

are completely blind.



19 million
children
worldwide
have serious
sight loss.



It's estimated that the number of people with sight loss could **triple in the next 30 years** due to population growth, aging, malnutrition and diet.

The major causes of blindness worldwide are

- **Un-operated cataracts**
- **Uncorrected refractive error**
- **Glaucoma**



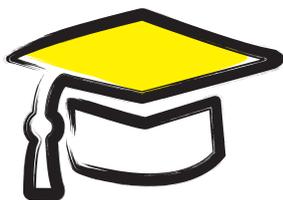
Source: World Health Organization, 2017

The challenges are overwhelming

The difficulties facing people who are blind in developing countries can be even more overwhelming than they are for people here in Canada.

**LESS
THAN
10
PER
CENT**

of children who are blind in developing countries receive formal education.*



In many Latin American countries, it is still common practice for adults who are blind to **require co-signers** to withdraw money from their own bank accounts**



80 per cent
of people with disabilities
live in poverty in
developing countries.***



Less than **10 per cent**
of all published works can be read
by people who are blind or partially
sighted around the world.*

* World Intellectual Property Organization, 2016

** World Blind Union

*** World Health Organization World Report on Disability, 2011

How we help

We're proud to be a founding member of the World Blind Union (WBU), the internationally recognized organization representing **253 million blind and partially sighted people** in 190 countries.

The WBU is the international voice of people who are blind, speaking to governments and agencies on issues concerning blindness.

We are proud to partner with:

- World Blind Union
- International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment
- International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness
- Transforming Braille Consortium
- Braille Authority of North America
- DAISY (Digital Accessible Information System) Consortium
- Accessible Book Consortium

Through these partnerships, we provide skills and knowledge to people who are blind worldwide in the following areas:

- Rehabilitation
- Accessible book production
- Braille literacy
- Technology
- Employment
- Research
- Organizational development



A century of international contribution

Over the past 100 years, we've worked in partnership with international organizations to make a difference in the lives of people with sight loss across the globe.

- **In the 1930s** our founder Colonel Edwin Baker helped establish organizations of and for people who were blind in the Caribbean, including the Caribbean Council for the Blind.
- **In 1952**, Art Magill, the future president of CNIB, helped to establish the School for the Blind in Egypt.
- **In the 1980s** we spearheaded a capacity-building project in the Caribbean. This included training service workers to provide daily living, orientation and mobility skills, as well as capacity-building for blindness organizations in the region.
- **Between 1992 and 2017** we helped develop a capacity-building project for blindness organizations in Africa, which trained leaders in the field of blindness.
- **From the 1990s to the mid-2000s** we were involved in the International Youth Internship Program - supported by a grant from what was then called CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency). Youth from countries in the Caribbean, Africa and Asia interned at CNIB to gain skills, knowledge and work experience.
- **In 2005** we worked with the African Union of the Blind to provide an HIV/AIDS awareness program for people in Africa who are blind.
- **In 2008** we assisted the World Braille Foundation in the preparation of a successful three-year project whose aim was: Advancing the Promotion of Inclusive Education for All Visually Impaired Children in Africa.
- **In 2010** we travelled to Nepal to spend five weeks teaching blind students orientation and mobility skills at the School for the Blind in Kathmandu.

CNIB representatives visit Rwanda and Tanzania, Africa in 2007



Some recent international contributions

In the past several years, we've been a leader in many areas of global development and change, working with international agencies and organizations whose goals are aligned with our own: **to change what it is to be blind today.**

- **Since 2007**, CNIB has had **active involvement** in several international organizations associated with vision, most notably the AMD (Age-related Macular Degeneration) Alliance, Operation Eyesight Universal and Canadian Surgical Eye Expeditions.
- **For 10 years**, we've been providing office space and **infrastructure support** to the international head office of the World Blind Union.
- **In 2013**, we worked closely with the Canadian government to support the ratification of **The Marrakesh Treaty**, a landmark win for literacy across the globe for people who are blind. Developed by the World Intellectual Property Organization, the Marrakesh Treaty centres on making changes to domestic copyright laws to allow sharing of accessible reading materials between nations. The ratification of this treaty allows people with print disabilities worldwide to have access to a wider range of published literature than ever before.

“The Marrakesh Treaty is opening up the world of information, knowledge, education and employment for so many people, and it’s going to improve the quality of life of blind people all over the world.”

-Diane Bergeron, CNIB Foundation’s Vice President of Engagement and International Affairs



- **Since 2014, we provided strategic guidance** to New Zealand Blind Foundation (NZBF) which included participating in a major study on prevalence of blindness in New Zealand.
- **In 2016**, we collaborated with nine blindness organizations around the world to develop the first affordable, refreshable **Orbit Braille Reader**. This device is now making a positive impact in the lives of people who are blind in developing countries, where access to braille can be severely limited due to cost.
- **In 2016**, through our partnerships with Vision Australia and the Blind Foundation in New Zealand, we welcomed young people with sight loss from Australia and New Zealand to our annual SCORE program, a two-week youth summer camp that **teaches young people new skills** and allows them to connect with other youth who are blind. The 2016 camp was focused on pre-employment skills, academic readiness and independence, and allowed participants to exchange knowledge and build lasting friendships with peers from across the globe.



“I am really interested in the pre-employment part of the program. I think it’s very cool to find out how different, or similar, things people say to people with a visual impairment in employment workshops conducted on the other side of the world.”

-Mia Armsworth, SCORE camper, Australia

- **In 2016**, CNIB Foundation's Guide Dog Program team developed an excellent relationship and routinely shares key learnings with guide dog organizations from around the world, including the International Guide Dog Federation, Career Dog Australia, Seeing Eye Dogs Australia, Blind Foundation New Zealand Guide Dogs, Guide Dogs UK, Guide Dogs for the Blind and The Seeing Eye located in the USA.
- **In 2017**, we worked with Canada's Civil Society to produce the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Shadow Report** in response to the Government of Canada's Report. The Shadow Report provides the CRPD Committee with details on the perspective of people with disabilities in the country being reviewed. This ensures that the voice of the people who the Convention protects is being heard.
- **In 2017**, our Braille Program provided a grant to the Blessing School for the Visually Impaired (BSVI) in Rwanda to provide them with a **braille embosser**, enabling students to read and write in braille. The school was established to give disadvantaged Rwandan children who are blind with an opportunity to get an education.

“We thank CNIB for your support! The Blessing School continues to help our students shape their future and provide them with an education they would not have gotten otherwise. We seek to show them that they are cared about, important, and that they can do anything someone with sight could do.”

-Jean Bosco, BSVI School Director, Rwanda

- **Currently**, we collaborate with non-profit organizations like U.S.A.'s National Industries for the Blind to **advance employment opportunities** for individuals with sight loss through resource sharing and by delivering business skills training, employment support services and professional development programs.

CNIB's ambition is to change what it is to be blind for all. There is still much that needs changing, and an increasing number of people who are affected by sight loss across Canada - and around the world.

We need your support

You can help us change what it is to be blind - worldwide

With 100 years of a proven track record of success behind CNIB, we continue to take a holistic look at the needs of those who are blind or partially sighted around the world. We are helping them celebrate a lifespan of fun and opportunity, while rededicating ourselves to be a strong advocacy and social justice voice for all.

You can help us create a better tomorrow for individuals who are living with sight loss around the globe.

Your gift will ensure more people with sight loss in more than 190 countries will have equal opportunity to participate fully in life. Thank you for helping the CNIB Foundation make a vital difference in the world of blindness and sight loss.

Did you know?

Every year, CNIB invests more than \$1 million internationally to improve the lives of children and adults with sight loss around the globe. We're moving the needle forward on the barriers facing blind and partially sighted people around the world.

But we can't do it alone.



To make a donation or learn more:

Phone: 1-800-563-2642

Web: cnib.ca

 myCNIB/

 @CNIB



CNIB Foundation Mission

To change what it is to be blind through innovative programs and powerful advocacy that enable Canadians impacted by blindness to live the lives they choose.

About the CNIB Foundation

Celebrating 100 years in 2018, the CNIB Foundation is a non-profit organization driven to change what it is to be blind today. We deliver innovative programs and powerful advocacy that empower people impacted by blindness to live their dreams and tear down barriers to inclusion. Our work as a blind foundation is powered by a network of volunteers, donors and partners from coast to coast to coast.

