



For Immediate Release

Community members in Chikankata District have better access to affordable eye care with the opening of the Kafue Gorge Eye Clinic, supported by Operation Eyesight Universal

Kafue Gorge Eye Clinic Launch Event: Friday, December 6, 2024, 09:00 – 13:00
Hours [Kafue Gorge Hospital, 4CMW+QFM, Luwanya, Zambia](#)

Lusaka, Zambia, December 6, 2024: Every child, woman and man in Chikankata District will now have better access to affordable quality eye care with the opening of the Kafue Gorge Eye Clinic, a community vision centre at Kafue Gorge Hospital. The clinic was constructed, outfitted with diagnostic equipment and supplied with furniture through support from Operation Eyesight Universal, an international development organisation that has been working in Zambia since 2001 to prevent blindness and restore sight.

In 2020, Zambia had an estimated [1.4 million people living with vision loss, according to the Vision Atlas of the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness. Globally, 1.1 billion people live with vision loss, and 90 per cent is preventable or treatable.](#)

The Kafue Gorge Eye Clinic is part of Operation Eyesight Universal's Hospital-Based Community Eye Health Programme model. To support the government's efforts to increase coverage of eye health services, Operation Eyesight Universal has been implementing the model to improve access to quality eye health services at the community level and to reach underserved communities. The model integrates eye health services into existing public health facilities (opening of the Kafue Gorge Eye Clinic at Kafue Gorge Hospital), raising community awareness that educates families in preventing eye diseases through a network of Community Health Workers. These workers are recruited from the district, who go door to door, screening everyone's vision and referring those with vision loss to vision centres and hospitals.

Phiri Kennedy, Zambia Country Director, Operation Eyesight Universal, says, "This is a proud moment for Operation Eyesight as we launch the Kafue Gorge Eye Clinic in Chikankata District. This investment is part of our hospital strengthening thematic area, where we support government to extend quality services to communities that are underserved. We will continue to support the government through this and many other interventions, to take services closer to the people and prevent avoidable vision loss. We urge the community in Kafue Gorge to fully utilise this service to prevent people from losing sight unnecessarily."

As a partner of Operation Eyesight Universal, OneSight EssilorLuxottica Foundation is supporting the project by equipping the optical shop to dispense eyeglasses. "Partnerships are the driving force behind progress in vision care. The collaboration between Operation Eyesight Universal and the OneSight EssilorLuxottica Foundation at the Kafue Gorge Clinic



demonstrates how collective efforts can address vision care challenges holistically. From equipping the clinic and training teachers to conduct eye exams and promoting community awareness, this partnership is transforming access to eye health services in Zambia, paving the way for a future where everyone can see the world clearly,” said Mustapha Njie, Head of the OneSight EssilorLuxottica Foundation in Africa.

The opening of the Kafue Gorge Clinic is part of the eye health care work Operation Eyesight is carrying out in Zambia in 2024, which includes:

- opening the Kafue Gorge Eye Clinic (community vision centre) at Kafue Gorge Hospital;
- providing eye exams for more than 100,000 people at partner hospitals, vision centres (such as the Kafue Gorge Eye Clinic) and outreach camps;
- conducting vision screenings for 15,000 pupils through school screening camps;
- Trained 61 health workers in Primary Eye care
- performing 540 sight-saving surgeries;
- rehabilitating 71 dysfunctional boreholes to provide clean water close to communities (this helps prevent trachoma, a blinding eye disease, and improves the lives of women and girls who can focus on their livelihoods and school rather than hauling water);
- dispensing 2,796 prescription spectacles (including readers).

About Operation Eyesight Universal operationeyesight.com

Operation Eyesight Universal is an international development organisation working to prevent blindness and restore sight. Our vision is the elimination of avoidable vision loss. Founded in Calgary, Alberta, Canada in 1963, we are a global community spanning four continents – Africa, South Asia, Europe and North America. While our vision is global, our focus is local. Our team’s presence on the ground allows us to leverage the unique strengths of our communities of work. Through activities like community outreach, water and sanitation projects, and health education, we are addressing the root causes of avoidable vision loss, such as poverty, poor sanitation and gender inequality.

Operation Eyesight’s Work in Zambia operationeyesight.com/zambia/

Operation Eyesight has been operating in Zambia since 2001, collaborating with the Ministry of Health and other stakeholders. In 2023, in partnership with the respective district health departments, we established two new vision centres, at **Kanyama General Hospital** in Lusaka Province and **Kapiri Mposhi Urban Health Clinic** in the Central Province, benefiting over 400,000 people.

About OneSight EssilorLuxottica Foundation onesight.essilorluxottica.com



The OneSight EssilorLuxottica Foundation is a registered charitable organization, reflecting the commitment and values of EssilorLuxottica to help eliminate uncorrected poor vision in a generation.

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