



When you give the Gift of Sight, you touch the lives of many. For Junmoni, from Assam, India, a simple pair of prescription eyeglasses meant the ability to provide for her family and build a brighter future for her two children.

Vision restored, hope renewed

To weave cloth using a handloom, you need patience, coordination and, most of all, keen eyesight.

So when Junmoni, a handloom weaver, started having trouble with her vision, she knew her livelihood was in peril.

The mother of two lives in Chakala, a village near the Brahmaputra River in Assam, India. Her husband works as a day labourer, which offers little financial stability. As a result, Junmoni's weaving is the family's primary source of income.

As her vision faltered, Junmoni was producing less and less cloth. She worried about the fates of her two children, nine-year-old Sarna and 13-year-old Sanjib. Her hopes of keeping them in school and sending them off to higher education dwindled

as the family's situation became more and more precarious. She even considered selling off her weaving equipment to bring some money into the household.

A knock on the door changed everything for her. Earlier this year, an Operation Eyesight community health worker showed up at Junmoni's doorstep as part of a community-wide screening program.

After Junmoni described her vision problems, she was referred to a free screening camp happening in her neighbourhood. Without needing to leave her village, Junmoni was diagnosed with near vision and received a free pair of prescription eyeglasses. She marvels at the difference a pair of eyeglasses can make.

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"It's exciting how a small thing can change the world," Junmoni says.

Today, she is back at her handloom and supporting her family, her dreams of sending young Sarna and Sanjib off to college once again intact. The compassion of our donors and partners has brightened not only Junmoni's future, but her family's as well.



Making trachoma a thing of the past



Did you know trachoma is the leading cause of preventable blindness in Kenya and many parts of Africa?

This painful bacterial infection causes irreversible blindness if left untreated. Worse yet, women and children are more likely to contract this condition.

We are supporting the distribution of antibiotics in Kenya's Narok County to treat and reduce transmission of trachoma. This is happening in partnership with the local Ministry of Health and other partners, with the goal of eliminating trachoma from the county by 2025.

Community health volunteer Peter Reyia administers antibiotics in Orbama Village, Kenya, to help eliminate blinding trachoma from the area. This work is continuing in summer 2022 as we take one more step towards making Kenya trachoma-free.

"Narok is home to many who raise cattle, which attracts flies that spread trachoma. We are now building on the success of our work to date in the area," explains Alice Mwangi, our Country Director for Kenya. "Treating and preventing transmission of trachoma through distribution of antibiotics is one of the most effective ways to eliminate this condition from entire regions."

In 2021, our Kenya team distributed antibiotics to more than 466,000 people in Narok, covering nearly 90 per cent of the target population for this program. In summer 2022, we are leading another planned Mass Drug Administration (MDA) in the region.

Our trachoma elimination projects are designed to implement all four components of the World Health Organization-recommended SAFE strategy:

- **S**urgery to treat advanced cases of trachoma;
- **A**ntibiotics to eliminate infection, which includes Mass Drug Administrations (MDA);
- **F**acial cleanliness; and
- **E**nvironmental improvement such as wells, boreholes and latrines.



In addition to linking communities with hospitals, vision centres provide eye exams, dispense prescription eyeglasses and refer patients for specialized treatment if needed. Vision centres are critical hubs for communities that otherwise would not have access to the most basic of eye health care, either due to economic or geographic factors.

New study boosts vision centre model

A four-year study of one community in Pune, India has found that the presence of a local vision centre played a key role in the reduction of blindness and visual impairment among local patients and families.

Published in the May 2022 edition of the Indian Journal of Ophthalmology, it is confirmation that our approach is both effective and sustainable.

“We have known for some time that the presence of vision centres in a community, supported by door-to-door outreach, has a measurable impact on health outcomes for patients,” explains Kashinath Bhoosnurmath, our President & CEO and co-author of the study.

“Data like this only helps us become more effective in achieving our mission of preventing blindness and restoring sight. We’re grateful to our donors who are investing in this critical work.”

The study looked at approximately 44,000 people living in a low-income, urban slum area of Pune. They were surveyed over a four-year interval by local health workers in the community.

Over the course of the study, the prevalence of blindness and visual impairment in the community was reduced by nearly 62 per cent. Learn more at operationeyesight.com/pune.



Community health workers, recruited from within a community, play a key role in connecting others in their area with eye health care and other health resources.

Annual Report shines a light on our people

We have much to celebrate about 2021. Our Annual Report — available now — showcases the impact we had together last year. Read the stories and meet the people that made 2021 a year of impact and success.

Contact us to receive a copy or view it online at operationeyesight.com/annualreport.



Cataract surgery reveals surprise for Zambian mother

Thanks to donors like you, Maureen received sight-restoring cataract surgery. Now she can play with her five children again and watch them grow and thrive.

It was a moment of great joy. Maureen from Matero, Zambia had undergone cataract surgery, and after seven years of blindness, she could see clearly again.

When she got home from the hospital, she was over the moon to set eyes on her five children, grateful that she could see their precious faces once again. Then she stepped inside her house and got the shock of a lifetime.

The walls of her home were covered top to bottom with crayon drawings! It seems her youngest children had become quite the little artists, leaving a rainbow of colours throughout the entire house.

And while it was certainly a gift to be able to see her kids' masterpieces, a messy home just wouldn't do. The single mother did what many tireless and dedicated moms would do in this



situation; she got out a bucket and rag and started cleaning.

Maureen had lost her sight shortly after her husband passed away in 2015. Her life became a struggle and she had to rely on the oldest children to help her get around and manage the household.

This past January, two community health workers showed up at Maureen's home during a door-to-door screening. They identified her cataracts and within a week she was transported to the nearby hospital's eye unit for sight-restoring surgery.

"I am so happy that I got my vision back," she says. "I no longer struggle to take care of and cook for my children."

Neya Chander's passion for painting began with memories of visiting nature with her grandfather. Today, she's using art sales to support Operation Eyesight and other good causes.

Donor Profile:

Neya Chander

For painter Neya Chander, art and philanthropy complement each other perfectly.

In early 2021, two of Neya's paintings became the first of many philanthropic gifts from sales of her work through www.KaiArt.Work. We were grateful to be a recipient of her generosity. Neya plans to expand her website to feature more charities and artists who wish to donate proceeds from their work.

"I want to create a space for artists and buyers to come together to foster change. The proceeds from each piece will go to the buyer's charity of choice."

Neya says she supports organizations that create meaningful impact.

"I need glasses for all activities. I couldn't drive or do homework without them," she says.

"Globally, access is limited. Prescription glasses or cataract surgery has a profound impact on someone's quality of life."

Thank you for your generous and creative support, Neya!



From selling art, to making a tribute donation, to leaving a gift in your will, there are many ways to support our sight-saving work. Contact us to learn more.

Get in touch



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