



For Immediate Release

Operation Eyesight Universal Encourages Parents, Guardians, Caregivers and Children to Make Eye Health Care a Priority this World Sight Day (Thursday, October 10) – in Ghana and across the world

450 million children worldwide have an eye condition that requires treatment – detecting and treating eye conditions early can prevent lifelong consequences of vision loss

Accra, Ghana, Tuesday, October 8, 2024: Operation Eyesight Universal is championing child eye health care this World Sight Day, Thursday, October 10, 2024, alongside County governments and the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) and its more than 250 global members. Currently, [450 million children worldwide have an eye condition that requires treatment, and 90 million children live with sight loss, according to the IAPB Focus on Child Eye Health 2022 Report](#). Early detection of eye conditions is essential as [approximately 40 per cent of childhood blindness is preventable or treatable](#). For those in need, wearing prescription eyeglasses can reduce class failure rates by 44 per cent. Children who go without treatment can face lifelong consequences – those with vision loss in low- to middle-income countries are two to five times less likely to attend school, according to the [IAPB Vision Atlas](#).

Operation Eyesight has been working to prevent blindness and restore sight in Ghana since 2006, and in partnership with the Government of Ghana, is successfully integrating eye health services into the primary health care system. To date, the organization has partnered with 40 districts to implement projects focused on hospital strengthening, community eye health, integrated eye health, disease control, and research and advocacy. In 2023, Operation Eyesight provided child eye health by working with the United States Agency for International Development’s (USAID’s) Child Blindness Program to implement school eye health projects in four districts in the Central Region. This benefitted 84,000 students, teachers and health care professionals. With additional funding from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Latter-day Saint Charities, screenings extended to 538 schools in four additional regional districts.

Emmanuel Kwasi Kumah, Country Director for Ghana, says, “World Sight Day is a special day for all of us including Operation Eyesight Universal, to take stock of the work that we do in forming local partnerships and strengthening health systems. It is a time for us to map out effective and efficient strategies with our key partners – the Ghana Health Service, Ghana Education Service and community members themselves – collectively to ensure that our tagline *For All The World To See* is realized in the quickest possible time.”

In and around World Sight Day, Operation Eyesight is focusing on child eye health through the following activities and programs in September and October:

- Training of 30 community health nurses and 23 teachers to screen students and teachers in Weija-Gbawe Municipality

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- Awareness and eye screenings of students and teachers in multiple schools in the Weija-Gbawe Municipality (Mallam, Weija and Gbawe Cluster of Schools)
- Distribution of prescription eyeglasses to students and teachers identified and identified in previous screenings in Weija-Gbawe Municipality, the Ajumako Enyan Essiam District, Effutu Municipality and Agona West.

Kashinath Bhoosnurmath, President and CEO of Operation Eyesight Universal and elected IAPB trustee says “Every day, preventable and treatable eye health issues cause children to miss out on learning and social opportunities. They do not just deserve but have the right to a happy childhood. Healthy eyes enable kids to learn, play and thrive, setting them on a path for life.”

Child Eye Health Facts [Source: [The Issues - The International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness \(iapb.org\)](#)]

- 450 million children worldwide have an eye condition that requires treatment
- 90 million children live with some form of sight loss
- Children with vision loss in low- to middle-income countries are two to five times less likely to attend school
- 40 per cent of childhood blindness is preventable or treatable
- Wearing prescription spectacles can reduce class failure rates by 44 per cent

Help Children Love Their Eyes

- Parents, guardians and caregivers are encouraged to help the children in their lives to love their eyes with eye health tips and resources: operationeyesight.com/worldsightday
- Help school children in Ghana love their eyes by donating at [Ghana - School Eye Health - Operation Eyesight](#)

About Operation Eyesight Universal *Learn more at* [GHANA - Operation Eyesight](#)

Operation Eyesight Universal is an international development organization, and registered charitable organization in Ghana and multiple other countries, that works to prevent blindness and restore sight. Its vision is the elimination of avoidable vision loss. Founded in Canada in 1963, Operation Eyesight is a global community spanning four continents – Africa, Europe, North America and South Asia. Its vision is global and the focus local, with teams on the ground in communities of work. Through activities like community outreach, water and sanitation projects, and health education, Operation Eyesight is addressing the root causes of avoidable vision loss which contribute to [six United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: no poverty, good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, and partnerships for the goals.](#)



About World Sight Day Learn more at operationeyesight.com/worldsightday

World Sight Day is an annual day of awareness, held on the second Thursday of October every year, to draw attention and action to vision loss in the world. The focus of World Sight Day for 2024 is child eye health. Currently, more than 1.1 billion people live with vision loss, and 90 per cent is avoidable or treatable, according to the [IAPB Vision Atlas](#). Vision loss and eye health care are highly correlated with complex and interconnected development issues such as the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness champions World Sight Day, as do its 250 members around the world.

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