



Your generosity helped restore sight to Kamal, who has returned to farm work after getting his cataracts removed

## The knock on the door that changed everything

All his life, Kamal has worked as a farmer. He raised two boys on money he earned working the land, and even now, at age 69, he continues to farm. But in recent years, he struggled with the work because of his failing vision.

Kamal lives alone with his wife in Auraha, a village in Nepal's southern lowlands. His youngest son passed away due to illness, and his eldest moved out to start his own family. Due to financial difficulties, Kamal had never gotten an eye exam until recently, despite his poor eyesight.

Happily for Kamal, his village is covered under a community eye health project that we are running in collaboration with the Nepal Eye Hospital, our partner in Kathmandu. A community health worker visited his home and quickly noted that Kamal had cataracts in both eyes. The health worker encouraged Kamal to visit the nearby vision centre for a formal diagnosis.

At the vision centre, Kamal's cataracts were confirmed. In his right eye, he was reduced to Hand Motion vision, meaning he could not even count someone's fingers, but could only detect a waving hand in front of his face.

After being reassured that he would receive treatment free of charge, Kamal decided to go ahead with the cataract surgeries.

He recovered well from both operations, and as he was still nearsighted, he also received a pair of prescription eyeglasses.

Now, Kamal proudly sports his eyeglasses every day. He says he is grateful to the team from the Nepal Eye Hospital for taking on the role of his absent son – providing emotional and logistical support throughout the process. He is also very thankful to Operation Eyesight donors for making his sight-saving surgery possible.

***Thank you to all our donors for helping Kamal regain his sight!***



Meleniah, right, speaks at an Avoidable Blindness-Free village declaration in Elgeyo Marakwet County, Kenya



Meleniah beads a gourd while her husband watches on. He says he is happy to see his wife back to doing what she loves

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## Sharing her love of bead work

For the past three decades, 78-year-old Meleniah has enjoyed doing bead work, a hobby she says brings her comfort. She lives with her husband in Chepaktet, a village in Elgeyo Marakwet County, Kenya, where she raises tree seedlings for a living. She supplements her income by selling her bead work.

When she was forced to put away her needle and thread due to poor eyesight, Meleniah thought her heart might break. She says she felt a lot of stress when she could no longer see to thread a needle, but she didn't tell anyone about her eye problems because she worried one of her family members would quit work to take care of her. Besides, she figured her poor vision was simply a result of old age.

Eventually, Meleniah's husband, having previously undergone cataract surgery himself, realized what was going on. He invited one of their granddaughters into the home to help with cooking and housework.

When a community health promoter arrived on their doorstep in January, Meleniah was assessed

and told she too had cataracts. They referred her to our partner, the Iten County Referral Hospital, where she was diagnosed and underwent cataract surgery on both eyes. The treatment was provided free of charge, as had her husband's operations, thanks to the generosity of our donors.

Meleniah recovered quickly, and soon she was back at it – beading late into the night, thrilled she could do the delicate needlework once again.

When Meleniah's village was declared as Avoidable-Blindness Free, she was there to tell her story and to encourage everyone to seek treatment when they have eye problems.

Always the saleswoman, Meleniah had another motivation for speaking out that day. She brought along some of her fancy work and set up a table, happily selling her beaded gourds, bracelets, necklaces and keychains to neighbours attending the event.

***Meleniah is grateful to donors like you for helping to bring the joy of beading back into her life!***





A World Sight Day awareness march in Eldoret, Kenya in October 2023

## Gearing up for World Sight Day 2024

Mark your calendars – we’re getting ready for another frenzy of activity during this year’s World Sight Day, coming up on October 10.

The annual awareness day, spearheaded by the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness, is a chance to focus the world’s attention on the importance of eye health, and to inspire people to take care of their eyes. And it’s more than just a day – we have a full week of festivities planned!

This year’s campaign will have a special focus on child eye health, complete with a new World Sight Day mascot, Artie. We can’t wait to share some Artie-themed, kid-friendly materials that you can enjoy with your children and grandkids. Stay tuned to our webpage: [operationeyesight.com/worldsightday](https://operationeyesight.com/worldsightday)

You can look forward to pictures and stories about Avoidable Blindness-Free village declarations, parades, community eye screenings and more. We also plan to deliver new prescription eyeglasses to hundreds of

schoolkids in Ghana that week – and we’ll be on site to capture the magic, so you can share in their excitement.

Follow us on social media for updates in real time, or check your email inbox just after Thanksgiving for a round up of the events. Be sure to subscribe for our eNews so you don’t miss an update: [operationeyesight.com/subscribe](https://operationeyesight.com/subscribe)



President and CEO Kashinath Bhoosnurmath poses with Artie, the new World Sight Day mascot, at a conference in Mexico City in June 2024





Staff from our Calgary office pose with their heart-shaped World Sight Day glasses

## Help us spread the word about eye health

Get out your markers, glitter and bedazzlers – it's time to decorate your own World Sight Day glasses! We've included a pair of the heart-shaped glasses for you in this issue of *SightLines* in hopes that you will become our newest eye health ambassador.

What are we asking you to do?

- ✓ Take a picture of yourself wearing the glasses and **share it on social media** (or ask a friend or family member to help you). Tag us and tell us why you love your eyes and how you take care of your own eye health. Use the hashtags #LoveYourEyes #WorldSightDay and #OperationEyesight.
- ✓ Make a **pledge to get your eyes** (and your kids' or grandkids' eyes) **examined** this year, and share about it on social media, encouraging people to do the same.
- ✓ Wear your amazing heart-shaped glasses around your friends and family, and when they

ask about them, you can tell them all about World Sight Day and the importance of taking care of their eye health!

People from all over the world will be joining in on the fun this World Sight Day – October 10. We can't wait to see your specs!

### Connect with us or tag us on social

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Donors Karen Booth and Jonathan Huyer pose on top of Mount St. Piran near Lake Louise, Alberta

## Big impact inspires a lifetime of giving

Longtime donor Jonathan Huyer says the simplicity of our approach was what attracted him to Operation Eyesight's work.

"I'm looking for the unsung heroes," he says. "The ones that are quietly working away and making a massive difference, largely in places that we would never see firsthand. And yet the impact that they make is profound."

The retired Calgary engineer, who now lives in Canmore, AB, first heard about Operation Eyesight 30 years ago, when an employee made a presentation about our work at his church. After learning more about our projects, Jonathan decided to get involved. He's been donating ever since.

As a wildlife photography enthusiast, Jonathan, along with his wife Karen Booth, has travelled all over the globe. He says that visiting low- and middle-income countries, including some of those where we work, has helped them both develop a perspective on what life is like in struggling communities.

When the couple decided to pare down the list of charities they donate to, Jonathan said Operation Eyesight made the cut because of how far his donation dollars go.

"You're taking someone who is wholly dependent on others for their day-to-day living, and through a simple operation or treatment, you can turn them back into providers for that same household," he says. "It's the economic well-being of their whole family."

*Thank you, Jonathan and Karen, for your longtime support! We simply could not do our work without the generosity of donors like you.*



**GIFT OF  
SIGHT**

Getting ready for the holiday giving season? We are too! Watch for your Gift of Sight order form, which will land in your mailbox in early November. Greeting cards, gift tags and eCards will be available. The order form will also be posted online at [operationeyesight.com/giftofsight](https://operationeyesight.com/giftofsight)