

Focus

Your magazine from  Sightsavers Spring 2026

Two nations. Another historic victory!

Egypt and Senegal have both
eliminated trachoma – freeing
Nar and millions like her from
its agonising grip



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Saving sight and bringing hope

After years of excruciating pain from trichiasis, Nar in Senegal received her life-changing surgery

Sixty-five-year-old great-grandmother, Nar, is busy selling wood outside her home in Touba, Senegal. But before surgery, her days were blurred by pain and worry.

Nar was suffering from trichiasis – the advanced stage of trachoma – and her eyelashes scratched painfully against her eyes, causing constant irritation. As she struggled with her sight, Nar had to give up her business and found her lack of vision very frustrating. Then she remembered her sister.

Continued overleaf

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Inspired to seek help

Nar's sister had previously undergone trichiasis surgery, successfully performed by Sightsavers-trained surgeon, Mr Boubacar Top. Hearing that Mr Top was in a nearby town, Nar went to see him.

Mr Top examined Nar's eyes and told her he would be visiting her village to screen the whole community and arrange free trichiasis surgery for those who needed it – including Nar.

Soon afterwards, Nar received her operation. With her pain gone, she's now a proud advocate for surgery, encouraging others to seek treatment too.

“Whenever I see someone suffering from it. I refer them to Mr Top. He is the one I know, he is the one who treated my sister... And also, he is the one who healed me.”

Nar



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Freed from the pain of trichiasis, Nar can care for her grandchildren again

Delivering treatment where it's needed

With your support, Sightsavers brings together governments, health teams, our partner NGOs, and communities to connect crucial services and reach out to people who might otherwise be missed. And just look what you've helped achieve in Senegal!

We're determined to keep going until trachoma is eliminated from every country where Sightsavers works. With you beside us, we know we can do it!

“Personally, I express my gratitude to Sightsavers and congratulate them from the beginning to the end as they have contributed a lot alongside the Ministry of Health.”

Mr Boubacar Top



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Senegal successes since 2012 include...



From pain to childhood joy

When a child who's had trachoma can learn, play and have fun again, the impact of your support shines through

In Uganda, Sightsavers' Programme Officer, Jamespeter Akol (right), has witnessed the power of this remarkable connection first hand – visiting children like Happy before and after their trachoma treatment.

"For me, revisiting the children and seeing how they're looking now, seeing them looking happy, is so fulfilling," Jamespeter told us. "It helps us appreciate that even when we travel on bad roads to deliver our programmes, it's not in vain."



Before surgery, Happy could hardly bear to open her eyes



Before surgery, six-year-old Happy was in constant agony from advanced trachoma. Her mother, Fosca, had to leave her job at a local restaurant to give Happy full-time care. Thankfully, surgery relieved Happy's pain, so she could have fun and do things for herself.

"Seeing the children playing around, being able to mix with others – and parents telling you their kids can now go to school – that's very good," says Jamespeter. "Because when a child depends entirely on a parent, the family suffers. But when a child regains independence, the whole family transforms."

Help more children like Happy

Happy's story is proof of the powerful, lasting difference your kindness makes. With your extra gift today, you can help us find and treat more children suffering from trachoma – and change their futures for the better.

Photos: © Sightsavers/Jason Mulikita 2023



"Happy plays with her friends very well! If you tell her not to play, she says, 'Mummy, let me play – I used not to play for a long time'."

Fosca, Happy's mother

A bright new era

In Zambia, you're helping children like Luyando see clearly – and supporting lasting eye care for rural communities

Many people living in remote, rural areas of Zambia find it hard to access basic eye care. While government-run services are free or heavily subsidised, people on lower incomes still struggle to afford medical care and the additional costs of travelling to their nearest hospital.

As a result, entire generations can miss out on essential eye care – leaving adults unable to work and children unable to attend school. But we're working to change things.

With our partners, we're helping to build a community-centred cycle of eye care that reaches the most isolated villages and covers everything from diagnosis through to cataract surgery.



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The care starts with Sightsavers-trained community case finders who screen people in their homes and send a list of patients to the nearest hospital.

An eye care team then visits the community to carry out further screenings and treatment.

Adults with cataracts receive surgery at the camp, while children are referred to the hospital.

Travel and food costs are covered, enabling parents to take their children to hospital for surgery – and, crucially, return for any follow-up treatment.

With their sight saved, adults can focus on working and providing for their families, helping Zambia to build a stronger economy. And children like Luyando can return to school, play with their friends, and go on to participate fully in society.

Luyando's life transformed

You may remember Luyando from one of our appeals and a previous issue of Focus. Not so long ago, her world was clouded by cataracts. Now she has big plans for the future.

"I want to be educated," she told us. 'And when I complete my studies I want to become a doctor so that I can help people in the similar situation that I was in.'



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Inspiring positive change

You're supporting inclusivity programmes for women with disabilities, led by champions like Ramatu

Last year, the African Disability Protocol became legally binding, protecting the rights of more than 80 million people across the continent. And in Kaduna State, Nigeria, exceptional people like Ramatu (centre right) are leading the way.

Ramatu, who was born with a disability, is a widow and mother of three. Through the Sightsavers-supported Inclusive Futures programme, she runs free workshops that include discussing the barriers women with disabilities face in accessing sexual health and family planning services – including contraception.

“I’ve become an advocate of the voiceless women. Of women with disabilities.”

Ramatu

In 2022, Sightsavers launched the campaign #RatifyTheADP and worked with our partners to call on African governments to pass the legislation.



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Finding their voices

Some women don't know that family planning services are available. Others are too shy to go or can face critical reactions from family members. Ramatu encourages them to set personal goals, voice their needs and stay strong. She's already witnessing a 'ripple effect'.

“One lady told me that since the training, she's discussed family planning with her married daughter. Others have started visiting family healthcare services. My hope is for inclusiveness. To see that women with disability are equal with other people in the community.”

You make this work possible. And together, we can ensure that women with disabilities across Africa have the tools, confidence, and opportunities to thrive.

Beating trachoma, country by country

Today, millions of people no longer live under trachoma's shadow – and that's something to celebrate!

Of the 27 countries where Sightsavers and our partners work, eight have achieved elimination and five are getting closer.

We know how to beat trachoma, and we're determined to keep going, so please stay with us on this life-changing journey.

Eliminated trachoma

Egypt (2025)	Benin (2023)	The Gambia (2021)
Senegal (2025)	Mali (2023)	Ghana (2018)
Pakistan (2025)	Malawi (2022)	

Nearing elimination

Botswana	Guinea Bissau
Namibia	Sierra Leone
Guinea	

Working towards elimination

Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	South Sudan	Zambia
Cameroon	Kenya	Tanzania	Zimbabwe
Chad	Mozambique	Uganda	
Cote d'Ivoire	Nigeria	Yemen	



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