

# OUR WORK IN GHANA



## Operation Eyesight Universal

We are an international development organization working to eliminate avoidable vision loss and bring quality eye health care to communities where it's needed most. Founded in Calgary, Canada in 1963, we have grown to become a global community that spans four continents.

Whether it's a simple pair of eyeglasses or a more complex eye surgery, we believe everyone has the right to affordable, quality eye health care services. Together, our mission is to prevent blindness and restore sight – *For All The World To See.*

## Our history in Ghana

Since launching our programs in Ghana in 2006, we have worked with communities in 40 districts to implement projects focused on hospital strengthening, community eye health, integrated

eye health, disease control, and research and advocacy. Our programs are designed to provide a full range of eye health care services, allowing us to address common eye conditions such as cataract and uncorrected refractive error, as well as more complex cases like diabetic retinopathy and glaucoma. In partnership with the Government of Ghana, we are successfully integrating eye health services into the primary health care system.

In 2006, we established Watborg Eye Services, a secondary eye health facility in Awutu Breku in the Central Region. It serves as a referral facility and is fully accredited by the Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons for ophthalmological surgical rotations. Some trainee optometrists and ophthalmic nurses are also referred to the facility for hands-on training. A large portion of the cataract surgeries performed in Ghana are done at Watborg Eye Services, or by its surgical outreach team, and most of those procedures are done by our very own technical advisor, Dr. Boateng Wiafe.

## 2023 Ghana Highlights

- 14,821 people screened through **door-to-door surveys**
- 114,360 **students screened** through eye health programs
- 15,620 **people screened** at hospitals, vision centres and outreach camps
- 2,643 pairs of **eyeglasses** dispensed
- 2,153 sight-saving **surgeries** performed
- 266 community health staff trained or provided refresher **training in primary eye care**



## Community Outreach Programs

Our programs start at the village level. Community health nurses go door to door, delivering eye health screenings to entire households, and making referrals to our partner hospitals. The community health nurses continue to work with patients in the project areas over months or even years, until everyone in the community with treatable vision loss has been treated, at which point we declare villages as avoidable blindness-free.

In 2022, we declared our first village in the country as avoidable blindness-free. Together with our partners in 2023, we declared another nine communities as avoidable blindness-free in Mfantseman and Awutu Senya districts.

Our community-based approach allows us to connect people to other important health care services. In 2023 alone, 6,600 children under the age of six in our project areas in Ghana were linked to services for immunizations and vitamin A supplementations, and nearly 16,000 women were connected with pre- or post-natal services.

## School Eye Health

In partnership with the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID's) Child Blindness Program, the Ghana Health Service and the Ghana Education Service, we implemented school eye health projects in four districts in the Central Region, benefiting more than 84,000 students, teachers and health care professionals over the course of the 15-month project. With additional support from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Latter-day Saint Charities, we brought eye health screenings to 538 schools across another four districts in the region, reaching another 86,000 students in 2023.



*Five-year-old Grace and 14-year-old Isaac pose for a photo with their mother Samanta after getting surgery at Watborg Eye Services. The two children received referrals to the hospital after being identified during a school eye health screening. After being formally diagnosed with cataracts, they both received surgery free of charge. Now they're back at school, performing to their full potential, their futures back on track.*



## Hospital Strengthening

In 2023, we supported six hospitals across the country. We work with the hospitals to ensure they have what they need to deliver the best possible eye care to patients. This includes investing in equipment and infrastructure and helping train staff.

Also in 2023, we built the capacity of 354 community health nurses in primary eye care. We also provided refresher training for seven ophthalmic nurses and optometrists in pediatric ophthalmology and provided funding to a student to study ophthalmic nursing at the Korle-Bu Ophthalmic Nursing School in Accra.

We also provided five partner hospitals with ophthalmic equipment, including slit lamps, ophthalmoscopes, retinoscopes, trial lenses with accessories and fundus cameras. By strengthening entire health systems, we can help make quality eye health care a standard of care at more hospitals and clinics.

## Blindness and Visual Impairment Study

In 2016, we led a National Blindness and Visual Impairment Study in partnership with the Swiss Red Cross, Ghana Health Service and the Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons. The study, funded by Standard Chartered Bank's Seeing is Believing, was the first of its kind in the country. It included nearly 4,600 survey participants and established baseline data for vision impairment in the country that continues to guide government programming to this day.

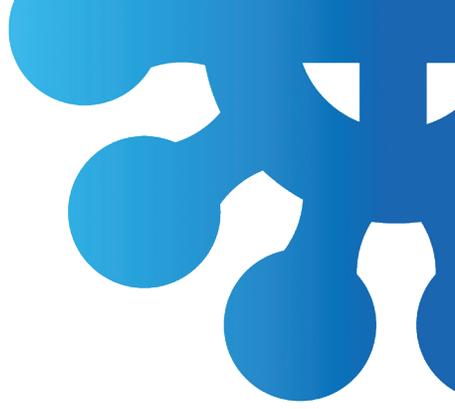
## The Road Ahead

In the next five years, we plan to develop new partnerships, enhance our existing partner hospitals, and reach more people in more communities. We also plan to increase our research and advocacy work, build more capacity among our partners and staff, and increase awareness of our programs across our countries of work.

Building strong partnerships is at the core of what we do. Our partners help us mobilize and share knowledge, technology and resources to ensure that our work is efficient, intersectional and impactful. Through partnership and collaboration, we reach new audiences and beneficiaries, effectively furthering our mission to prevent blindness and restore sight.



*Our Technical Advisor, Dr. Boateng Wiafe, served as principal investigator and lead researcher for the first-ever Blindness and Visual Impairment Study in Ghana*



## Will you join our Global Community?

Learn more: [operationeyesight.com/partnerships](https://operationeyesight.com/partnerships)  
We would love to start a conversation!



Emmanuel Kwasi Kumah  
Country Manager, Ghana  
Operation Eyesight

[KumahE@operationeyesight.com](mailto:KumahE@operationeyesight.com)  
+233-50-1504693

Emmanuel, based in Accra, has worked for Operation Eyesight for nearly 15 years and has been leading our programs in Ghana for more than a decade.