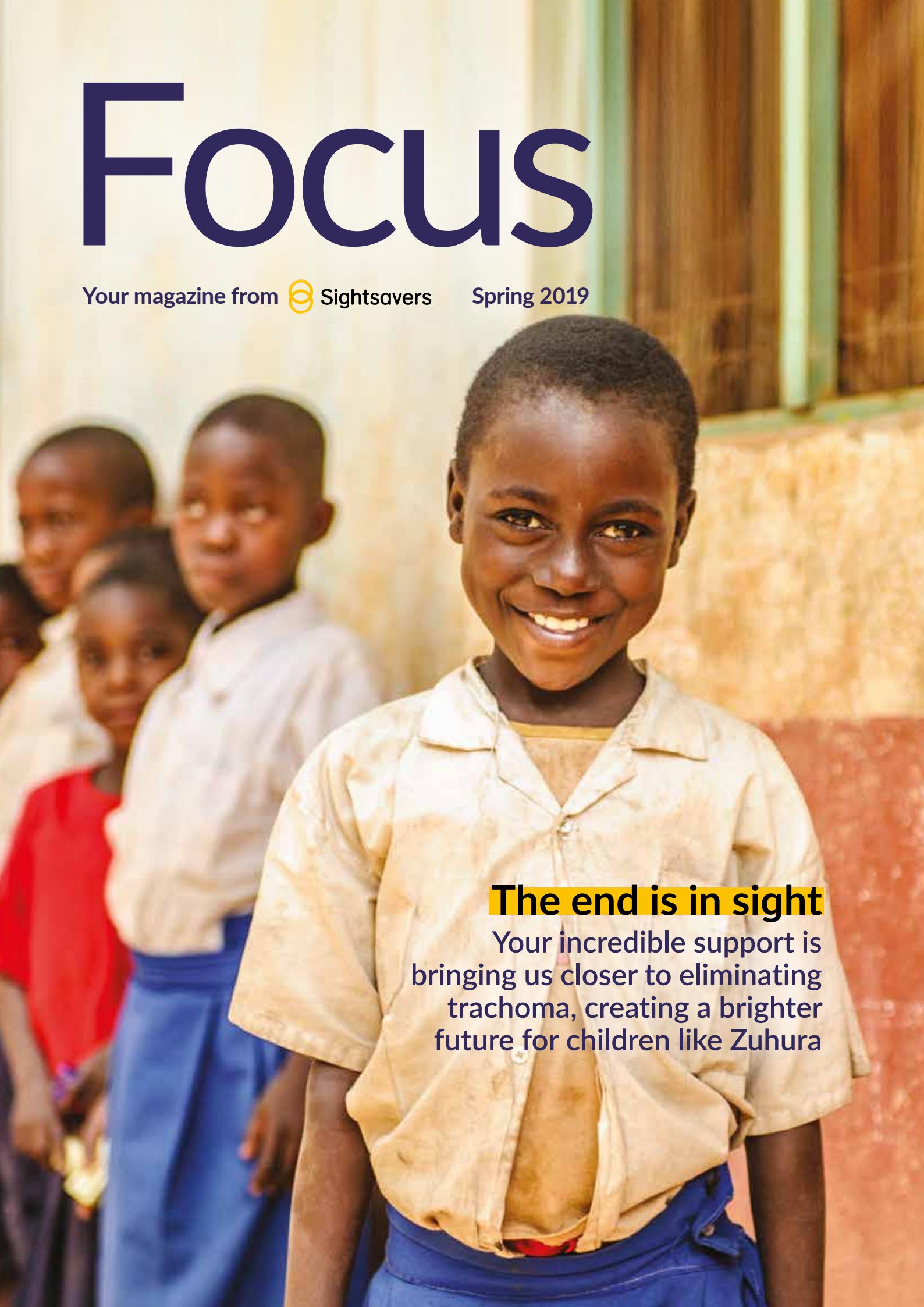


Focus

Your magazine from  Sightsavers Spring 2019



The end is in sight

Your incredible support is bringing us closer to eliminating trachoma, creating a brighter future for children like Zuhura

The end is in sight

Together we can rid the world of trachoma by 2025

Your outstanding support has brought us to this crucial milestone, and we're hoping you'll help us finish the job, because right now we have the chance to wipe out trachoma for good. Together, we can free millions of people from the terrible cycle of agony, blindness and poverty trachoma brings, so they can live their lives to the full. And we can work to ensure this cruel disease never returns.

As you'll see, we've dedicated most of this issue of Focus to our goal of eliminating trachoma, including our End is in Sight campaign, which aims to wipe out the disease in every country where we work by 2025. We're making great progress, and on page 6 you can read how Ghana recently became the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to be declared trachoma-free by the World Health Organization. We're now working hard to ensure Tanzania soon shares Ghana's success, and you can read more about this on page 4. **We'll also explain why any extra gift you give between now and 15 May will be doubled by the UK government.**

Thanks to you, we're closer than we've ever been to eliminating trachoma. The end is in sight and I hope you're as excited and inspired as we are!

My very best wishes,



Becki Jupp

Becki Jupp
Global Director of Fundraising

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My Sightsavers

Get the latest on life-changing work you support, share your fantastic fundraising stories, join our community of like-minded sight-savers and much more. Whatever you want to see, say or share, stay connected your way:

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email info@sightsavers.org

telephone **0800 466 1111**

write to **Freepost SIGHTSAVERS**

Thanks for your support!

Ending the agony

With your support, we're determined to eliminate trachoma in Tanzania by 2020, saving sight and transforming lives

Tanzania faces the same challenges as many trachoma-endemic countries – a lack of eye care professionals and many remote, poverty-stricken communities that can't reach or afford treatment. There's limited awareness of trachoma too, including how to prevent it by keeping hands and faces clean.

Though we're working hard to improve awareness and give more people access to clean water, one in 10 households in Tanzania still have no sanitary facilities. Despite these and other challenges, we're determined to wipe out trachoma countrywide by 2020.

Making headway

Thanks to amazing sight-savers like you, we've been working in Tanzania since the 1970s. In the last two years alone we've trained more than 2,000 community volunteers, and have screened over 60,000 people, including Zuhura, pictured on the cover, and her fellow schoolmates at Nandenje primary school, shown below.

We've also dispensed more than 90,000 antibiotic treatments and performed over 7,000 operations to treat trichiasis, the advanced form of trachoma. Now we need to finish what we've started and rid Tanzania of trachoma for good. Halima Nanyambo is living proof of what this will mean to people.



Making Halima smile again

Halima lives in Ruangwa with her husband Hamis, two of their four children and several grandchildren. She started having eye problems a long time ago, but didn't know she had trachoma. By the time we met Halima her eyelashes had turned inwards and she was in danger of losing her sight. "I can't see in the light properly and I'm in a lot of pain," Halima told us. She talked of when the tears poured down her face and how it was especially painful when the wind blew dust into her eyes.



Halima was overjoyed when we told her that straightforward surgery could end the pain and save her sight. We arranged for her to have a free operation at one of our outreach camps, which meant she wouldn't have to cover the costs of travelling to hospital – something the family couldn't afford. When the surgeon examined Halima he found that in one eye alone, more than 10 of her eyelashes had turned inwards and were stuck to her eyeball. It's hard to imagine how agonising this must have been for her day after day. Thankfully, that's all in the past.

Today, Halima's life is transformed! Free from pain and saved from a lifetime of blindness, she's happy, active and working hard to help support her family. Halima has even started braiding hair again, to bring in extra income – intricate work she found hard to manage before her surgery. Her story epitomises the huge difference it makes to be free from the relentless misery of trachoma, and you can help more people like her.

"I am so happy – thank you"

Halima Nanyambo



60,000

people in Tanzania were screened for trachoma in 2017 and 2018, and we gave out more than 90,000 antibiotic treatments

Help us make Tanzania trachoma-free by 2020

In Tanzania today, 3.2 million people are still at risk of trachoma and 77,600 are in urgent need of trichiasis surgery. Will you help us reach and treat them, by giving an extra and much-needed gift?

The amazing news is that every pound you give between now and 15 May will be doubled by the UK government – up to £2 million – making your kind gift go twice as far. Please don't miss this incredible opportunity to help others like Halima, because they really need you.

Matching your donations with


The end is in sight



Labour of love

Barikisu and Ayishetu are sisters, and they both work as midwives. Sadly, both had eye problems, but didn't realise they had trachoma. Their deteriorating eyesight was affecting their ability to work and when our health workers found them, the sisters couldn't see well enough to deliver babies any more. As Ayishetu explained, they were disheartened and unhappy. "It was hard to see the mothers in labour and not be able to help," Ayishetu told us. "I had difficulty carrying out daily tasks and could only see blurriness."

Thankfully, our health workers made sure Barikisu and Ayishetu received the sight-saving surgery they needed. These two bright and capable women are now back at work, delivering babies and making sure they have a safe and healthy start in life. See more at sightsavers.org/focus



©Sightsavers/Ruth McDowell

"When they told us we could be helped I was happy and I felt my prayers had been answered"

Ayishetu

Ghana leads the way

Last June, Ghana was officially declared trachoma-free, showing how your kind donations make a real difference

Country by country, village by village, person by person; that's how we're beating trachoma, and we couldn't do it without you. We were overjoyed when on 13 June 2018, the World Health Organization announced that Ghana had eliminated the disease as a public health problem. Ghana is the first sub-Saharan African country to achieve this massive success, and with your continued support we'll make sure others follow.

Positive proof

Ghana's breakthrough achievement shows that freeing the world from trachoma is possible, and gives a huge boost to the dedicated medical teams and community volunteers who work so

hard to screen and treat people. It's also further proof that the World Health Organization's SAFE strategy works. SAFE stands for surgery, antibiotics, facial cleanliness and environmental improvements. It tackles the causes and effects of the disease, ensuring countries are able to remain trachoma-free for future generations.

As Ghana drew closer to the finishing line, our community health workers were carrying out the final screenings and treatments in the northern province of Yendi. They travelled door to door, seeking out anyone still needing treatment for trachoma. Their extraordinary efforts ensured that mothers could resume looking after their families, children could go to school and people like Barikisu and Ayishetu could return to work.

CATCH: a coordinated approach to community health

Across Africa, our community health workers are checking people for a range of sight conditions and diseases



©Sightsavers/Jason J Mulkira

A day after cataract surgery at Moroto Hospital in Uganda, Loumo Mariam is excited to be able to see again. This all-encompassing eye care approach is part of our CATCH programme, which ensures that everyone receives the treatment they need whatever their eye condition.

CATCH started when we realised that many people attending our trachoma screening clinics had cataracts and other eye diseases. Without the right equipment or facilities, the clinics were unable to treat them. However, a lack of money to cover treatment or travel costs prevented these people from seeking further help.

In 2014 we asked you, our brilliant sightsavers, to help us solve this problem and you responded magnificently. Your generous donations were matched through the UK government's Aid Match programme, enabling us to ensure that people with cataracts receive free transport to their nearest eye care facility for surgery. CATCH is already making a difference in Malawi, Kenya, Zambia, Uganda and Mozambique, and your gifts to support our work in Tanzania will go towards funding a new CATCH programme there.

Everyday hero

Meet Gladys Atto from Uganda, one of the dedicated and talented cataract surgeons whose training you've supported

In last autumn's issue of Focus we asked you to help us address one of the biggest obstacles to improving eye health in developing countries – the lack of trained eye health professionals.

By the end of 2018, we aimed to train nine new cataract surgeons and seven ophthalmologists across Senegal, Guinea, South Sudan and Uganda. You responded really generously, helping to set more people like Gladys on the path to saving sight and building long-term eye health services in their home countries.



Photos: ©Sightsavers/Jason Mulkta

Hands-on learning

We caught up with Gladys at Moroto Hospital, Uganda, which serves a population of around 103,000. Shockingly, she's the first and currently the only cataract surgeon working there. She helps perform around 20 to 30 cataract operations a day, and her favourite moment is when the patient's bandages are removed and they can see again: "Sight is the most important sense," says Gladys. "Trust me, if you wake up and you can't see, your life will be completely changed."

She may just be beginning her career as a cataract surgeon, but Gladys is very passionate about helping to improve eye care in Uganda. In the region where she works there's still limited awareness about eye conditions and treatments and people are often very wary about seeking help. They may be happy to use eye drops, but they don't want surgery. Yet this is an area where going blind is likely to have a very negative impact on a person's quality of life.

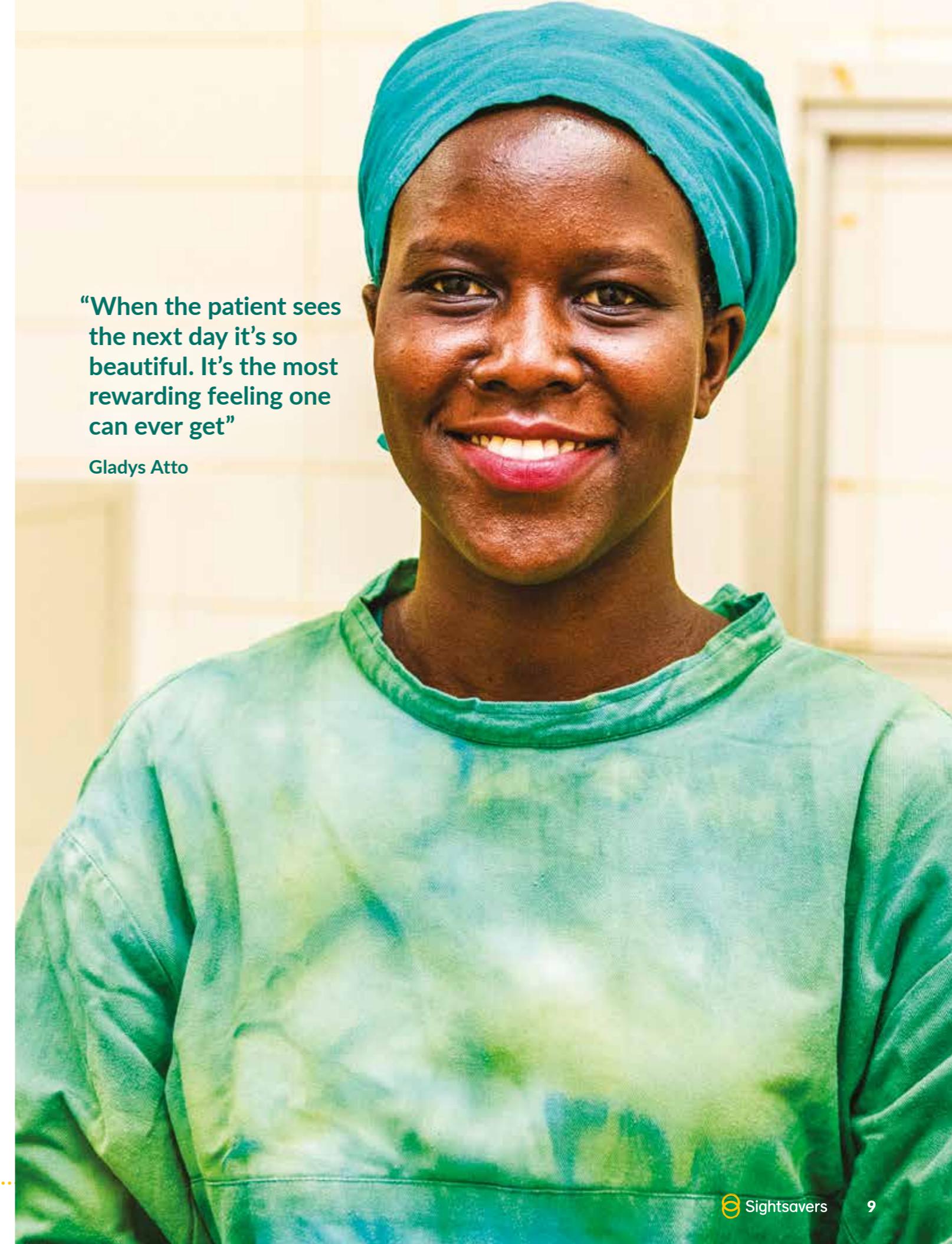
"Life here is really hard, even for those who can see," says Gladys. "And because food is scarce here the women work harder. They're the ones in charge of building the home and taking care of their husbands and families, so a woman who can't see will be far more disadvantaged than a man."

Despite the challenges, Gladys's commitment to saving people's sight is inspiring and she's extremely grateful for the support you've given her.

"Since my childhood I've just known that I needed to be a doctor. I like to see people get better, and even when I'm not working I'm looking into people's eyes, wondering if they have a problem. Thank you so much for sponsoring me, and for giving me the chance to do my best."

"When the patient sees the next day it's so beautiful. It's the most rewarding feeling one can ever get"

Gladys Atto



Making a difference

Together we're tackling avoidable blindness and fighting for the rights of people with disabilities



Special connection

Last October, Blue Peter celebrated its 60th birthday and we remembered the show's special link with our name.

First aired on 16 October 1958, Blue Peter became renowned for its annual charity appeals. They encouraged viewers to support worthy causes by collecting items that could be sold to raise money. Blue Peter's Sight Saver appeal in 1986 asked children to host bring-and-buy sales to fund mobile eye units in Malawi, Nigeria and Tanzania. The aim was to raise £100,000 for the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind (Sightsavers' original name).

The appeal completely smashed its target! More than 32,000 bring-and-buy sales took place across the country, raising over £2 million. There was an added bonus too. We liked 'Sight Saver' so much that we changed our name!

Positive partnership

We're thrilled to announce that Sightsavers is now supported by People's Postcode Lottery.

People's Postcode Lottery exists to support good causes, with 32 per cent of ticket sales going directly to its charity partners. Sightsavers will now benefit from this extra funding throughout the year and, thanks to the players, we can expand some of our life-changing eye care and education programmes in Mozambique, Malawi and Uganda.



"When we launched Put Us in the Picture five years ago, we were optimistic it would make a difference – but we have been overwhelmed by its success"

Caroline Harper, Sightsavers' CEO

Put Us in the Picture Driving change

In December, we celebrated the fifth anniversary of our disability inclusion campaign, Put Us in the Picture.

Launched in 2013, Put Us in the Picture asked the UK government to prioritise people with disabilities in the fight against poverty in developing countries. In the past five years there have been some huge steps forward, including the UK Department for International Development's Disability Framework, the global Sustainable Development Goals being more inclusive of disability, and the first-ever global summit on disability. You helped make these things happen, and with your continued support we can go on working to do more.

Marathon achievements

A huge thanks to all of our amazing fundraisers, including our nine incredible London Marathon runners!

We really appreciate all the energy and commitment you put into supporting Sightsavers' crucial work. Last year's London Marathon was a great example of our fundraisers' extraordinary sight-saving efforts as it was the hottest on record! Despite the soaring temperatures, nine intrepid runners rose to the challenge and raised a staggering £23,595! You can meet three of these magnificent marathon heroes below.

Ben Quilter has a rare genetic sight condition called Stargardt disease, which means he has no central vision. Living with sight loss has spurred Ben on to help others and this big-hearted athlete has a London 2012 Paralympic bronze medal for judo and two marathons under his belt. In the 2018 London Marathon, Ben did an outstanding job of raising both money and awareness for Sightsavers, and we're extremely grateful.



"Dealing with blindness can be tough. Having lived through it myself with fantastic support, I was inspired to help others with sight loss in less privileged situations"

Ben Quilter



Having laser eye surgery made **Lorraine Leckenby** realise how lucky she was to receive treatment, unlike many people living in developing countries. Lorraine was inspired to run for Sightsavers after reading about our Million Miracles appeal and raised an outstanding £4,100 to help fund more sight-restoring cataract operations. Congratulations and well done Lorraine!



Get involved

There are loads of other ways to raise funds and awareness for Sightsavers, from cake sales and community raffles to work fancy dress days and sponsored bike rides. Download our fundraising pack at sightsavers.org/fundraise and share your own fantastic fundraising stories by calling 01444 446 674 or emailing events@sightsavers.org

Build a trachoma-free future

By including Sightsavers in your will, you can protect future generations from the agony of blinding trachoma

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Thanks to you, we're closer than ever to eliminating this terrible disease, and by remembering Sightsavers in your will you can help ensure trachoma never returns. Just think of the incredible difference this will make to generations of children like five-year-old Matamola.

Matamola lives in Zambia and spends most days with her grandmother, while her parents work out in the fields. She'd been suffering with itchy, weeping eyes for some time, but the family didn't know what was wrong or how to get help. Thankfully, eye surgeon Mr Ndalela carried out a mass eye screening in the village, and diagnosed Matamola with severe trachoma.

Mr Ndalela found Matamola just in time. Although serious, her trachoma had not yet developed into potentially blinding trichiasis and could be treated with ointment and a course of antibiotics. Matamola can put the painful past behind her and look forward to starting school next year. Her future is much brighter and you can help give thousands of children like her the same life-changing opportunity to gain an education, reach their potential and live fulfilling, independent lives.

Gifts in wills are vital to us, as they enable us to plan long-term work to fund sight-saving cataract operations and protect entire communities against trachoma and other painful, blinding diseases. Please, if you can, remember Sightsavers in your will. Your kind gift will have a huge and lasting impact on so many people's lives.

For a friendly, no obligation chat or for your free copy of Sightsavers' will-making guide, you can either:

Call 01444 446 600

Email info@sightsavers.org

Download at sightsavers.org/give-in-your-will

"There's a huge contrast between the tragedy of blindness and how little money is needed to restore sight. That's why I wanted to help"

Derek Robinson,
Sightsavers supporter and legacy pledger



Registered charity numbers 207544 and SC038110

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