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# Overview

# **New Sight Eye Care serves in the Republic of Congo to restore and** protect sight, transforming lives and communities in the region.

New Sight Eye Care is a registered charity founded in the UK in 2011 and in Hong Kong in 2013. We provide support and financial aid in our work to restore and protect sight in the Republic of Congo. We aim to transform lives and communities in the region through pioneering the first and only eye surgery centre in the northern part of the country and in building a new eye hospital in Ouesso. The charity is governed by trustees in the UK and by directors in Hong Kong, and is a non-profit limited company. See bottom left chart of key governing boards and committees.

The Trustees for New Sight Eye Care have reviewed our objectives and activities as set out in deeds of trust to ensure they continue to reflect our aims now and in planning future activities. While carrying out this review, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

# **Objectives**

The objectives of the charity are:

- The advancement of health, and the saving of lives in particular (but without limitation), by providing assistance overseas principally (but not exclusively) in the Republic of Congo for those affected with sight difficulties; and
- To fulfil such other purposes which are exclusively charitable and are connected to the charitable work of the Charity as the Trustees and Directors may from time-to-time think fit.

## **Impfondo Eye Centre**

The north of Congo had never had an eye centre. This was the reason that Joyce and Henri Samoutou uprooted their family's life in the UK in April 2012 to pioneer the first and only non-profit eye centre in the north of Congo. The eye centre is based at the Pioneer Christian Hospital in Impfondo, the capital of the Likouala Region. New Sight enjoys good relationships with the government, the Ministry of Health, as well as the local authorities and communities. New Sight has collaborated frequently with other non-profit organisations such as United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees and Médecins d'Afrique, who frequently refer their patients for eye treatment.

The eye centre in Impfondo continues to thrive and remains self-sufficient. The nurses who were trained by New Sight can now handle emergency, consultation, inpatient, anaesthetics, and minor surgery. Since his last surgical mission to Impfondo in May/June 2021, Henri Samoutou has not been able to return to perform major surgery due to COVID-19 and other travel restrictions, but hopes to do so soon.

# **Ouesso Eye Hospital**

Following the successful establishment of the Impfondo eye centre, New Sight was invited by local authorities to build a new eye hospital in Ouesso. The strategic location of Ouesso can make eye care accessible for the entire country of Congo. In November 2016, the purchase of the 6-hectare piece of land in Ouesso was completed, with one of the six hectares being a donation from the mayor's office in Ouesso. A team of topographic surveyors from Brazzaville completed land studies.

This future eye hospital is in a strategic location that can reach out to the whole of Congo, and perhaps even to neighbouring countries such as Cameroon and Central African Republic.

The initial plan for the Ouesso Hospital will include:

- 1. Inpatient Department
- 2. Outpatient Department
- 3. Optical shop and Workshop
- 4. Pharmacy
- 5. Surgical Unit
- 6. Core Infrastructure (electricity and water supply, incineration facility)

Subsequent extensions may include training facilities and staff and visitor quarters.



# **Our Vision**

# Our vision is for a world where no one is needlessly blind.

In line with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and the World Health Organisation's (WHO) inclusion of eye care as an integral part of Universal Health Coverage (UHC), New Sight's Vision is:

#### A world

- where nobody is needlessly visually impaired
- where those with unavoidable visual loss can achieve their full potential
- where there is universal access to comprehensive eye care services

The WHO World Report on Vision, published in October 2019, states that more than 2.2 billion people have a vision impairment or blindness, of whom at least 1 billion people do not have access to the services they need. Poor vision and eye health needs are expected to increase substantially in the coming decades, with the number of people living with blindness projected to triple by 2050.

The impact of vision loss cuts across many of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Improving eye health helps to reduce poverty (Goal 1) and helps to deliver on quality inclusive education, gender equality and decent work and economic growth (Goals 4, 5 and 8). According to the WHO, worldwide, four in five people who are blind or severely visually impaired are blind from avoidable causes. This means that we can prevent or treat their blindness.

New Sight follows the technical guidance provided by the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness in collaboration with the WHO to plan, budget and purchase the equipment and consumables needed. The bulk of our charity's surgery is to remove cataracts. Patients blind from cataracts can see again the day after this one-off operation.



"When sight is restored, lives are transformed, not just for the patients, but also for their families and even the wider communities."

There have been several well-documented studies that proved cataract surgery to be one of the top operations with the most measurable improvement in quality of life, 23 and supported the argument that it offers economic benefit to relieve poverty. 456

In addition to cataract surgery, we provide vision tests and aids (e.g. glasses), prevention and treatment of eye diseases and systemic illness involving the eye (e.g. diabetes and hypertension), an 'accident and emergency' service, as well as other surgeries (e.g. for glaucoma and ptervgium). Free administration of Vitamin A supplements and River Blindness treatment are also offered. For those who are assessed to be genuinely unable to afford paying for our very lowcost non-profit services, their costs are covered by New Sight's charitable poverty fund.

# A Year Full of **Growth and New** Beginnings

For the year ended 31 March 2022, some key progress and activities included:

- Our Ouesso Interim Eye Centre (IEC) provided 2,521 consultations. Close to 5,500 consultations since its establishment in July 2019.
- We have planned, prepared, equipped, and are about to open a new Interim Surgical Centre (ISC) next to the current IEC.
- Working on staff and student training and improving clinical standards including a new drug formulary and inventory system.
- New Sight's training school has selected six students (part of the first intake from the local community) to continue their training and further their practical skills from May 2021.
- We have an incredible core team of volunteers and pro-bono workers along with 18 full-time and 3 part-time staff.
- Local authorities have reaffirmed their ongoing support.
- New Sight has succeeded in raising more than HK\$3.8 million (USD 0.49 million / GBP 0.37 million) in this fiscal year. We entered 2022 financially poised to support the growth of our operations in Congo and to best serve our goal of eliminating avoidable blindness.

### Three key goals for 2021/2022:

- 1. To provide accessible and comprehensive eye services;
- 2. Empower the local community;
- 3. Ensure sustainability by partnering with local & international partners.









# 1. Provide accessible & comprehensive eye services

New Sight worked hard to improve and further equip the Ouesso Interim Eye Centre, support the Impfondo Eye Centre, and continued to pursue the most pragmatic approach to hospital construction in Ouesso.

## **Ouesso Interim Eye Centre (IEC)**

The IEC, based at Rue André Sama, has a reception, administration areas, as well as consultation and examination rooms. The training school is also on the same site. In May 2021, the team received delivery of eye equipment and New Sight uniforms and scrubs supported by generous donors. The IEC has continued to thrive at this bigger facility. We were pleased to see patient numbers gradually increase back towards pre-COVID levels. There was a considerable increase in patient numbers during the final three months of 2021 and the beginning of 2022. This can be attributed to a number of factors; increased confidence among the public about COVID-19, the new availability of prescription glasses at the eye centre, and publicity surrounding our screening and health education programme, which have all contributed to growth of the reputation of the clinic.

By the end of March 2022, the IEC has provided a total of 5,452 consultations. We treated around 210 patients per month in the last 12 months for infections, vision loss and emergencies. There is an excellent rate of return of our patients for their follow-up appointments. The trust and relationship we build with our patients means that we can ensure they receive the full treatment and care needed. We have received 100% positive patient feedback all year. So far, the most common eye conditions seen at the IEC have been eye infections, need for glasses, cataract, allergic conjunctivitis, pyterygium and glaucoma.

The team has focused on improving clinical standards including writing a drug formulary and developing new systems including a draft handbook of commonly seen clinical / eye conditions with process algorithms as reference for nurses to minimise errors.

# **New Optical Workshop**

In July 2021, the IEC received a lens edger machine that was generously donated by Optical 88 Hong Kong. Together with the life-transforming lenses donated by ZEISS Vision Care, the team was able to establish the service for manufacturing affordable prescription glasses on site at our new optical workshop. Our volunteer, Victor Kam, visited from Hong Kong to teach the team on how to use the lens edger. New Sight became the first and only manufacturer of prescription glasses in Congo.

Our very first patient was an 11-year-old girl called Rosette. She suffers from refractive error, and together with her rare prescription, she had been struggling to see for years. Her previous pair of glasses, which were made in Europe, were badly scratched with missing arms, so she had to hold them in her hand in order to read. The only option available to her family would have been to send her prescription off to Europe where glasses would be manufactured and returned. Since this was too expensive, she was forced to continue with the broken glasses. Cherissa Samoutou made Rosette's first-of-its-kind prescription glasses. Rosette and her family were overjoyed and thankful that New Sight could produce affordable glasses to her prescription.

The new Optical Workshop started producing glasses towards the latter part of 2021. As of 31 March 2022, we have provided 177 pairs of glasses (including 39 prescription/fabricated) for our patients in the last 12 months, a total of 389 pairs of glasses since July 2019.

"We are excited to bring sight-restoration through our new ability to produce affordable prescription glasses locally."

# **Ouesso Interim Surgical Centre (ISC)**

Facilities for an Interim Surgical Centre next to the IEC have been secured and renovation work is in its final stages. The team has worked hard to get the ISC up and running as quickly as possible. Medicine and medical equipment are close to sourcing completion and will be shipped from Hong Kong, China, UK, India and the Netherlands.

"This centre will enable us to meet our patients' urgent surgical needs in Ouesso while the hospital is being built."











## **Impfondo Eye Centre**

The eye centre in Impfondo continues to thrive and remains self-sufficient. Henri returned to Impfondo for another surgical campaign in May/June 2021. After four days and three nights of slow and challenging travel, Henri arrived at the eye centre. The whole facility and all instruments had to be cleaned and checked. He and nurse Ghislain carried out 22 sight-restoring surgeries in 6 days. Some patients had conditions with complicated pathology. One such patient was Gisèle, whose life had not been easy as she was born deaf and mute, and three years ago became completely blind in both eyes. Her family helped her to travel from Ouesso to Impfondo to have a cataract operation. After surgery, her family have said that she seems to have come back to life, and at her follow-up appointment back in Ouesso, she looked happy and renewed. She is now able to count fingers at 6 metres and smiles and waves. We are so thankful that New Sight was able to help restore sight to patients, and bring new life to them and their families. Due to COVID-19 and other travel restrictions, Henri was not able to undertake more surgical campaigns this year, but has been advising the eye centre remotely.

# **Construction Progress on Ouesso Eye Hospital**

Site preparation and access works began in November 2021, ready for construction to begin in 2022. Local contractors were hired to do site prep work including drilling a well and staking the property for the building footprint.

In July 2021, our project manager, Victor Kam from Hong Kong, and engineer Jack Eisenbach from the US, navigated circuitous journeys and COVID restrictions to attend construction meetings in Congo. Jack is part of the team of pro-bono American engineers, experienced in designing and building hospitals in African countries, who have been working tirelessly to optimise the design as well as minimise costs for our future eye hospital. Different viable build options were explored and evaluated including structure, materials and process. A new project description with scope of work and drawings was sent to two shortlisted contractors on 3 September 2021. We received two proposals by the extended deadline of 15 October. The Board agreed to focus discussions with one preferred contractor on 20 October and approved the final contract on 31 March 2022. The contractor will begin work in May 2022.

# 2. Empower the local community

With a view that education and training provide the most direct route to empowering the local community, New Sight has established a training school and conducted health education outreach.

# **Training School (paid for by generous donors of New Sight)**

After successfully completing the theory component, six out of ten students were selected to continue onto practical instruction. The students returned to start their practical training internship on 17 May 2021.

The trainees continued to learn alongside qualified staff at the IEC. Under Henri's supervision, they are beginning to do consultations and patient examinations.

"We are excited to see their skills, knowledge and confidence grow."

#### **COVID-19 Relief**

Through the kind donation of the Esquel Group, New Sight was able to present 12,000 reusable cloth masks to the Ouesso community in June 2021. New Sight Eye Care, represented by Siko Bambemba, presented 12 boxes containing 1,000 reusable cloth masks each to Mr. Abel Sidobe Gah, the Central Mayor of Ouesso, to be distributed together with health authorities to the community in the La Sangha province. Our trainees and staff all helped with the presentation and loading of boxes for distribution.

A further 4 boxes of reusable masks and another donation of surgical masks from generous supporters were reserved for our staff and trainees to use at the Interim Eye Centre and for the staff and patients in our surgical mission to Impfondo. We continue to promote prevention in the community and ensure our staff and patients receive adequate personal protection.













# **Screening and Health Education Campaign**

Following a two-year delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were delighted to launch our long-awaited free eye screening and health education programme in December 2021 with the specific objectives:

- Screening for diseases and conditions which may cause blindness
- Provide treatment for locally identified diseases, provide advice and encourage people to come to the Eye Centre for further investigation and treatment
- Provide eye health education to prevent eye diseases
- Raise awareness of the ophthalmic services available in Ouesso

The screening campaign was authorised and carried out with the help of the Ministry of Health and Population, Director of the Department of Health, the Ouesso Mayors, the Prefecture of La Sangha, and the Ouesso police and gendarmes. Local churches (Communion des Saints la Vie Saint, l'Église Évangélique du Congo et l'Eglise Elim), local schools (l'École Catholique et l'École Mambeke Boucher) and Congo Telecom provided the premises and wooden benches.

We held screening days in four different locations around Ouesso during December and January:

- 9 December 2021 at Place de la Cathédrale (La Place Rouge)
- 23 December 2021 at Congo Telecom
- 30 December 2021 at Mambeke Boucher School
- 13 January 2022 l'Église Evangélique du Congo (Congo Evangelical Church)

The events were advertised using leaflets, loudspeakers, and two local radio stations, Radio Beni and Radio Maria. The first screening, on 9 December, was attended by around 200 people. The nursing students demonstrated their skills as they worked alongside the rest of the team to assess patients. The staff and trainees tested the participants' visual health while Henri and nurse Esperence examined their eyes. The team arranged follow-up consultations if needed. The team served 592 patients over the four screening days. The most common conditions diagnosed during the screening were refractive errors (62%) (e.g. presbyopia, hyperopia, myopia, astigmatism), allergic conjunctivitis (28%), pterygium (16%), cataract (15%), pinguecula (7%). All attendees received medical advice, health education information, contact details and information about the New Sight Eye Centre as well as two free issues of the children's magazine published by New Sight.

# 3. Ensure sustainability by partnering with local and international partners

New Sight continued to strengthen relationships with local authorities, and work towards best practice communications, fundraising, team structure and operational processes.

# **Engagement with Local Authorities**

New Sight continues to operate under a Protocole d'accord signed with the Ministry of Health of Republic of Congo which covers performance as a health institution and provides for tax exemptions, visas and work permits.

Joyce, Henri and our Brazzaville agent, Patrick, met with the new Minister of Health, Mr Gilbert Moloki, and Director of Cooperation, Ms Jacqueline Nzalankazi, in Brazzaville on 7th October 2021. The meeting went well and they were very encouraging and supportive. The Minister had already heard of New Sight from the former Minister and had read our protocol. During the meeting, we celebrated all the life-transforming work that we have accomplished through our partnership, and together laid a roadmap and agreed on concrete plans to bring more help to the communities in the days to come, especially in matters relating to construction of the new hospital and overseas shipment. We were most encouraged by their readiness and commitment to help, and in their words, 'to accompany us' in our endeavours.

The Director of Health for La Sangha, Dr Kebele Faustin, and his colleague Mr Massamba Jacques visited the IEC on 12 December 2021. They were very happy and impressed by the services and in particular by the lens edger. They reiterated their support.

# **New French Facebook Page**

As social media is becoming more widely used in Congo, we have launched a new French Facebook page and WhatsApp number to help communicate with our patients. The Centre des Yeux Facebook page: <a href="www.facebook.com/">www.facebook.com/</a> newsightcentredesyeux, launched in early 2022, displays useful information about the eye centre and services offered.









#### **Ouesso Pioneer Team**

In October 2021, Siko, Delphine and Michelle Bambemba (Ouesso Pioneers since 2019), returned to their native country of Democratic Republic of Congo for family and personal reasons. Their successful 2-year mission in Congo included helping to open and run the Interim Eye Centre, teaching and guiding our trainees, assisting in the move from one clinic and classroom space to another, representing New Sight at key meetings, and contributing to our church community on weekends. We appreciate their help in more ways than we can count, over the many aspects and needs of starting a new project in a new town and new community from zero. The skills, experience and love that they brought have been invaluable.

## **Children's Magazine**

In May-July 2021, the Samoutous realised the dream of a children's magazine to promote health, literacy and numeracy among kids in Congo. In the spirit of Project Two Front Teeth and utilising creative ways to teach community health, we called on children and adult volunteers around the world to create a magazine for school children with a combination of health promotion (including eye care and dental health), literacy and numeracy activities, and a bible story colouring page. Our team in Congo launched a pilot issue and had it printed, bound and distributed to 7,860 children in over seven local schools and three local churches. The first issue of the children's magazine was met with much excitement at schools, churches and the Department of Education. The Director of Education for the region was so impressed that he asked us to print copies and future issues for all the schools in the region for the next school year.

To celebrate the start of the new school year and World Sight Day 2021, the second issue of the magazine was distributed in October 2021. This issue was full of fun activities that promote literacy and numeracy, and includes a special feature on healthy eating for the eyes and the body. The team printed 5,000 copies to teach the community about how to 'love your eyes' as per the theme of 2021 World Sight Day.

The team has distributed over 7,000 copies of the third issue of the children's magazine to schools and churches around Ouesso. Furthermore, the magazines are also being distributed in Brazzaville the capital as well as other provinces such as Likouala and Cuvette. Our team is working hard on improving the content and distribution for an even bigger impact.

# **Speaking at the Li Po Chun UWC Graduation Ceremony May 2021**

Joyce provided the keynote speech at the Li Po Chun UWC graduation ceremony held on Saturday, 22 May 2021. Streamed live, the ceremony was attended by 256 students from 90 countries, teaching staff, and the UWC board, while the national committees and parents joined online.

"She spoke about potential, and the passion, vision and purpose required to fulfil it, and the need to keep driving forwards."

# **Collection / warehousing by Columbia**

Columbia International Removals continued to provide free use of their container warehouse, packing, pick up and transportation services for all equipment, furniture and household items up to October 2021. From November 2021 onwards, New Sight has continued to use their storage facilities at a special discounted rate.

# **Shipment of essential supplies May 2021**

Thanks to generous funding from our supporters, the Compassion Award, and Doterra Healing Hands, we were able to send a large shipment of 44 boxes from Hong Kong to Congo in May 2021.

This shipment included:

- New and improved medical equipment to replace our older second-hand equipment at the IEC
- Medical tools such as thermometers and a blood pressure monitor, and supplies such as masks
- Uniforms and scrubs for our students as they begin practical work in the IEC
- Office and classroom supplies including printers and a projector

We were also able to purchase medication in the UK that was brought back to Congo.

















# **Birthday and individual** fundraising campaigns

Joyce's parents, Chim Hoo Fan and Michael Wong, and several supporters have turned their birthdays into donation campaigns for New Sight. Others also gave through personal fundraising campaigns such as sponsored trail runs and making and selling handcrafted almond butter.

Amazing New Sight supporters, Rendy and Alan, were invited to the popular Commercial Radio 1 & 2 show, 有誰共鳴 (Share My Song) in Hong Kong. They shared meaningful stories and songs from their extraordinary lives, including Alan's experiences as a doctor, Alan and Rendy's love story, and their friendship with our late friend and faithful volunteer Caterina. They chose to highlight New Sight and asked the listeners to support us. What a beautiful tribute to the brilliant lives that have been touched.

# **Sunrise for Sight Calendar 2022**

Signifying new light and new beginnings, Cherissa, Ezra and Karis Samoutou chose 'Sunrise for Sight' as the theme for their New Sight 2022 calendar. They wanted to encourage everyone to unite and look to the future from different corners of the world. The calendar was filled with beautiful photographs of sunrises from around the world generously provided by our talented supporters and chosen by the Samoutou kids. This was the fourth year of calendar sales with around 40% sold and the rest given away to major donors and stakeholders. Design and production of the 1,500 calendars was again a donation from QP Group. The main goal was to reconnect with supporters, provide a year-round reminder, and help to raise profile.

> "The sunrises remind us of the light that we bring to our patients with the important encouragement from our supporters."

Despite the impact from social distancing due to COVID-19, sales generated more than HK\$89,193 in funds.

A one sheet calendar was also produced in French for distribution in Congo with 200 copies printed.

## **Reaching out**

Outside of our clinic work, the team have been making connections and seeking to serve our community in other ways. At Christmas, we brought food, soap, and other practical gifts to the prison, and the Catholic mission where they care for elderly and young families in need.

## **Marketing Subcommittee**

Made up of individuals from the commercial field, the subcommittee brainstorms ideas and gathers resources to help the core team run marketing campaigns to create additional fundraising channels for New Sight. The PwC Experience team provides pro-bono digital marketing and communications expertise.

## **Legal advisory teams**

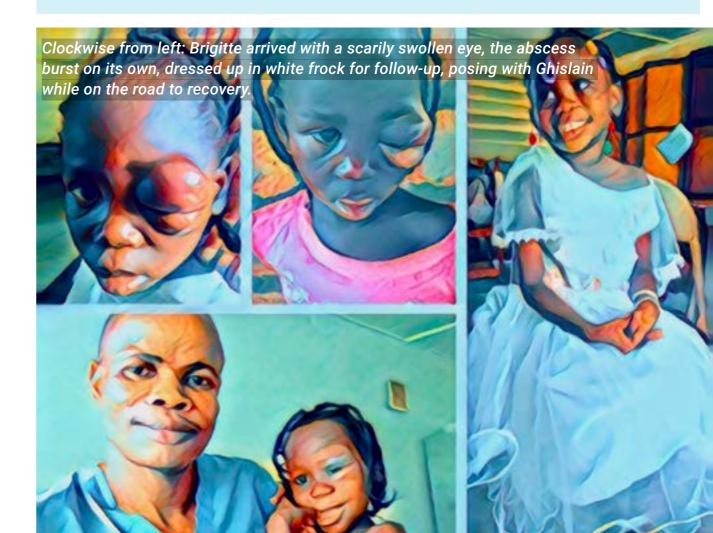
New Sight continues to be supported with pro-bono legal, governance and compliance advisory from Allen and Overy, and Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld in Hong Kong, and Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP in the US.

# The amazing support of churches, schools and corporations

New Sight's work is made possible by kind donations from generous individuals and caring organisations. See top right chart listing some of our supporters.

The series of images to the bottom right chronicle the treatment and recovery of one of our patients at the Impfondo Eye Centre.

Churches	Schools	Corporations
Alliance International Church	Baptist Lui Ming Choi Secondary School	Dr. Alan Ng
Aspire Church	Diocesan Boys' School	Champion Eye Centre
Christian Church of Divine Providence	Diocesan Girls' Junior School	Healing Hope Organisation
EFCC Kong Fok Church	Diocesan Girls' School	Little Pianists
Kowloon Tong Alliance Church	Funful Group of Schools	New Fei Optical (HK) Limited
Island Evangelical Community Church	Island School	Optical 88
North Point Alliance Church	St. Paul's Co-Educational College	QP Group
Union Church Hong Kong	Ying Wa Girls' School	ZEISS Vision Care
United Brethren Baptist Church		
The Vine Church		



<sup>1 &#</sup>x27;World report on vision'. WHO, 2019. https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/world-report-on-vision

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Javitt JC, Venkataswamy G, Sommer A. 'The economic and social impact of restoring sight'. In: Henkind P (ed) ACTA: 24th International Congress of Ophthalmology. Philadelphia, PA: JB Lippincott, 1983

International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment. Annual Report 2004. http://www.icevi.org/publications/Annual%20Report%202004.htm.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Javitt et al. Int. Ophthalmol. 1983: 1308-1312.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Kuper et al. 'Does Cataract surgery alleviate poverty? Evidence from a Multi-Centre Intervention Study Conducted in Kenya, the Philippines and Bangladesh'. PloS Medicine 2010; 5.11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Faal and Gilbert. 'Convincing governments to act: VISION 2020 and the Millennium Development Goals'. Community Eye Health. 2007 December; 20(64): 62–64.