When did you last have your eyes examined?

Or hand on heart, have you ever picked up a cheap, disposable pair of reading glasses at the supermarket? For 950 million people worldwide, that simple solution is out of reach. They cannot afford a conventional pair of glasses, and they often have no access to optical care at all. Yet good vision is one of the most powerful and lasting drivers of education, employment and economic development.



© EinDollarBrille, Sahil beams after the successful eye surgery, he can see clearly again (Foto: Antje Christ)

Erlangen, October 8, 2026 – Eye health remains a “blind spot” in many health systems. On this year's World Sight Day, EinDollarBrille e.V. (GoodVision Germany) is drawing attention to the severe shortage of optical care in countries of the Global South, and to the consequences that follow. Treatable but uncorrected refractive errors cost the global economy US$447 billion in lost productivity (IAPB Vision Atlas). Yet **no area of health care delivers a more sustainable return than eye health:** every US$1 invested yields US$28. For nutrition, the figure is US$13. **The impact, in other words, is enormous.**

This is where GoodVision makes a difference. The organization provides people in need with affordable, high-quality glasses, builds the structures for basic optical care in eleven partner countries, and trains local specialists to manufacture glasses and to examine people with refractive errors.

Eye care, training and awareness

For GoodVision, eye care is not charity; it should be within everyone's reach. The local partner organizations offer free eye tests and affordable, **high-quality glasses made locally, at a price that low-income households can manage:** roughly two to three local daily wages. Through its training model, the organization also **tackles the acute shortage of eye care professionals,** a shortage that bears most heavily

on the poorest people in the Global South, particularly in Africa and India, because there is little money to be made serving them. Germany has 96 ophthalmologists per million inhabitants. India has 18. In the southeast African country of Malawi, there is just one.

Beyond the lack of basic optical care, many countries also lack awareness. Countless people do not know that they see poorly, while others conceal their visual impairment for fear of losing their jobs. For this reason, **World Sight Day** is an important occasion local GoodVision organizations and partners in the program countries. Through campaigns and street marches, they remind people of the importance of eye health and the difference a pair of glasses can make. Close cooperation with municipalities is essential to reaching people where they live.

Empowering people and leaving no one behind

Many countries simply lack the infrastructure and budgets to provide comprehensive optical care, and their health systems are overstretched and underfunded. Partnerships with local authorities help bridge this gap, as does collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), which, through its SPECS initiative, seeks to raise the profile of eye health among disadvantaged countries in the Global South. As a local partner, GoodVision contributes in valuable ways: through training initiatives, support for municipal eye care centers and, above all, its core strength of reaching vulnerable groups and communities in the most remote regions, where no one else is willing to go.

Good vision for a better perspective for children's futures

Good eyesight matters most for the youngest. When children cannot see well, they struggle to keep up at school or leave early, especially since the blackboard is often the only teaching tool. They lose their chance at education and, with it, their prospects for a career and full participation in society. The figures from the Vision Atlas are striking, **better eye care for schoolchildren could add 13 million school years.** For this reason, school programs are a central focus of the organization’s work wherever it is active. Children are carefully examined and, where needed, receive glasses free of charge.

The story of Sahil Sethy shows what this means in everyday life. As a toddler, the boy from Bhubaneswar in India injured his left eye. The extent of the damage to his vision went unnoticed, and at school he increasingly fell behind.

During an GoodVision eye test at his school, Sahil's eyes were examined for the first time. The specialists quickly recognized that glasses alone would not be enough. A few days later, he underwent cataract surgery at a partner hospital. Today, Sahil can read from the blackboard and from his books again. His teachers describe him as more relaxed, attentive and self-assured.

“Untreated refractive error remains one of the major, neglected health problems in the countries of the Global South,” says Martin Aufmuth, founder and chairman of EinDollarBrille e.V. *“Sahil's story shows how essential eyesight is to a good life and to social participation. On this World Sight Day, we call for good eyesight to receive far greater attention in development cooperation, as a key lever for education, work and economic development.”*

World Sight Day

World Sight Day is celebrated every year on the second Thursday in October, which this year falls on 8 October. It is coordinated by the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) together with

its members, among them GoodVision, and the World Health Organization (WHO), under the internationally established motto **“Love Your Eyes”.**

The day aims to raise awareness worldwide of the importance of eye health and to remind people that a large share of vision impairment is preventable or treatable, provided simple solutions such as eye tests and glasses are available to everyone. Because the day still receives little attention in Germany, EinDollarBrille e.V. is making a point of highlighting its significance, particularly for countries of the Global South, where the lack of basic eye care shapes the educational opportunities, employability and quality of life of millions of people every day.

Note to Editors

We are happy to organize Interviews and provide images as well as additional background information upon request. Please get in touch. Further information can be found at www.eindollarbrille.de/en.

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About GoodVision / EinDollarBrille e.V.

*Over **950 million** people worldwide suffer from correctable refractive error, according to a WHO study, yet lack the means to purchase conventional eyeglasses. Against this backdrop, **GoodVision** is committed to enabling global access to high-quality glasses that are affordable, robust, and individually fitted. **GoodVision Germany** (EinDollarBrille e.V.) was founded in **2012** by **Martin Aufmuth**, the inventor of the GoodVision Glasses, and is recognized as a non-profit organization. Training eyeglass producers and establishing the program in **11 countries** across Africa, Asia, and South America are funded through donations. The project is sustainable: proceeds from the sale of glasses help cover the salaries of local professionals and the materials needed to make new glasses. Material costs for one pair are around **one US Dollar**, while the selling price is **two to three locally typical daily wages**. This has dramatically reduced barriers to access for millions of people. In addition, the organization advances the provision of ophthalmic examinations in remote and underserved regions, particularly **cataract surgeries**. Beyond training optical professionals, GoodVision also started to train specialized nurses. The goal is to ensure basic eye care and integrate it into public health systems in the program countries—so that early prevention, check-ups, and treatment are available to those in need.*