In 2015, HelpMeSee restored a blind person’s sight every 11 minutes thanks to supporters like you. 2015 marked milestones in groundbreaking technology and exciting global partnerships as we journeyed to eliminate cataract blindness.

In February, we launched the HelpMeSee Reach app—an icon-based app that is used by community health workers across the globe to connect patients in remote areas of the developing world with sight-saving surgeries.

We celebrated the completion of our 200,000th cataract surgery in August. The surgery was performed by our partner hospital in Madagascar, laying the groundwork for a nationwide campaign launched in collaboration with other local nonprofits and the Madagascar government.

We were invited to Beijing in October to introduce our groundbreaking surgical simulator to a standing-room-only audience of renowned ophthalmologists from around the world. None of this work would be possible without the commitment of our donors who have supported us through the years, including Trafigura Foundation, Eye Surgery Fund and Leigh and Jean Mason. We also want to thank our partners who have dedicated their lives to restoring sight. Join us as we take a look back at the highlights of 2015 and our campaign to restore sight to millions.

Sincerely,

James Tyler Ueltschi
President & CEO

Jacob Mohan Thazhathu
Chairman & Treasurer

Jeff Mullen
Board Member

Our vision is bold:
End the #1 cause of blindness in two decades.

In many developing countries, nearly 2/3 of blindness is the result of untreated cataracts (WHO, 2015). Over 102 million people are blind or severely visually impaired from untreated cataracts—over 20 million people.

The Challenge

Chairman & Treasurer
President & CEO
Board Member

like you.

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Simulation-Based Training

Now in its final stages of development, the HelpMeSee Eye Surgery Simulator and associated learning system will allow for unprecedented growth in high-quality training in Manual Small Incision Cataract Surgery (MSICS), an effective, safe surgery that can be completed in five minutes. The technology draws from our founders’ success at FlightSafety International, which now trains 75,000 pilots each year.

HelpMeSee Reach App

Our icon-based app captures patient information and transmits it to partner hospitals in remote areas. A patient intake process that used to take several days to complete can now be done in minutes.

HelpMeSee Surgical Kit

We have developed a pre-sterilized disposable surgical kit that ensures high-quality, safe surgeries in even the most remote locations. HelpMeSee medical experts monitor the outcomes and quality of the surgeries through our cloud-based surgical reporting system.

HelpMeSee Medical Experts

Our three-part model focuses on building sustainable local resources.
11 Minutes

Our partners delivered a sight-restoring surgery every 11 minutes in 2015.

Your Support: A Simple Act with Profound Effects

Partner Hospitals Located in 9 Countries

China, India, Madagascar, Nepal, Peru, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, Togo, and Vietnam

2012-2015

Supported Between 2012 and 2015

231,705 Sight-Restoring Surgeries

Our Impact

Improved Well-Being

Cataract surgery is one of the most cost-effective health interventions. The World Bank considers cataract surgery one of the most cost-effective health interventions— for good reason. With their sight restored, patients gain self-sufficiency. Many will return to work, earn more income over the course of a lifetime, and send their children back to school. They can return to work, support their families, and lead healthier lives.

Improved Economy

Once someone has sight-restoring surgery, they can return to work to support their families. Their caretaker can return to school or work as well.

Graph represents cumulative surgeries year over year.
OUTREACH SCREENING CAMP IN CHITRAKOOT, INDIA

10-11
2015 : A Year in Sight

March
THE NETHERLANDS
HelpMeSee expands into Europe with our Amsterdam office

April
INDIA
Launch of HelpMeSee Reach app for patient outreach

May
UNITED STATES
Our Marketing & Communications team receives five recognitions from Hermes Creative Awards

June
CHINA
First public demo of the HelpMeSee Eye Surgery Simulator

July
UNITED STATES
Global Citizen says we’re “revolutionizing eye care in developing countries”

August
MADAGASCAR
Launch of Madagascar pilot campaign
Launch of Madagascar campaign
HelpMeSee reaches milestone of 200,000 surgeries in under 4 years

September
THE GAMBIA
Launch of The Gambia Sees campaign to end cataract blindness

October
UNITED STATES
Forbes calls our global campaign “Tech for Good”
Global Citizen says we’re “revolutionizing eye care in developing countries”

November
INDIA
The Hindu publishes article “HelpMeSee Unfolds Cutting-Edge Technology to Combat Blindness”

December
MADAGASCAR
HelpMeSee presents to global eye health leaders at the First World Conference on MSICS in Pune

December
INDIA
Amsterdam office expands to Europe with our HelpMeSee Reach app for patient outreach
Take a closer look at what it takes to eliminate cataract blindness in The Gambia.

Haddy Sohna approaches her work with a rare sense of ease. Taking care of four children would be a full-time job for most, but Haddy manages to balance that responsibility with her work as both a cataract surgeon and partnership coordinator for HelpMeSee’s The Gambia Sees campaign.

Haddy’s journey in healthcare began almost three decades ago, not long after she was born. When she was younger, her mother worked for years as a nurse in Barra, a community on the north bank of the River Gambia. Her mother’s passion for helping others rubbed off on Haddy, who decided to follow a similar track. When she was older, she enrolled in a nursing program in Senegal and earned her diploma in Surgical Ophthalmic Nursing. It is a unique program in Africa that certifies nurses in cataract surgery.

Today, she’s one of the top cataract surgeons in The Gambia and estimates that she has restored sight to more than 500 people since she became certified. “Through your day to day experience, you know you’ve changed a lot of lives.”

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HADDY SOHNA, Partner Surgeon

Partnership, a community worker, and a patient worker met in the Gambia. The Gambia Sees campaign is run by HelpMeSee, a community health worker, and a surgeon. Stories about one of the patient’s stories about one of the patient’s stories about one of the patient’s stories about one of the patient’s surgeries.

When Aisatou graduated from university a few years ago, she knew she wanted to improve healthcare for her friends and neighbors. Her motivations came in part from her family’s experience: several years ago she saw her grandfather suffering from cataract blindness before he passed away. “When I became a nurse,” she said, “I decided to specialize in ophthalmology. I knew that when someone has cataracts, they must be treated.”

In the past, blurred vision from cataracts was considered “just part of old age” in The Gambia. Aisatou remembers a time when people with cataracts would first visit traditional spiritual healers instead of going to the health center or hospital; these spiritual healers were not able to help with their vision loss. Gradually, patients have become more comfortable visiting health centers to receive eye exams; the spiritual healers were not able to help with their vision loss.

When we met Aisatou at a training session, she was eager to learn how HelpMeSee’s tools could be used to improve the health of patients in her clinic. “I want everyone to know how HelpMeSee’s tools could be used to improve the quality of health care in The Gambia,” she said.

Security and trust are essential in the execution of screening guidelines. HelpMeSee has developed a suite of participatory tools to support community health workers’ efforts to educate patients on the importance and benefits of regular eye exams. Aisatou and Gibril undergo training on the HelpMeSee Reach app and approaches to screening near Banjul, in The Gambia.

When Aisatou graduated from university a few years ago, she knew she wanted to improve healthcare for her friends and neighbors. Despite being busy with her family and nursing work, Aisatou told us she is studying to become a cataract surgeon someday. “When you look at the setting in The Gambia, you can see there are people who need care,” Aisatou said. “I want to be a part of that.”

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When Aisatou graduated from university a few years ago, she knew she wanted to improve healthcare for her friends and neighbors.
For years, Amady made a living carving wooden masks, animals, and sculptures at his workshop.

For Amady, wood carving was more than a job. It was his livelihood. His passion.

“\textit{I feel very, very well after this operation...Thank you...Thank you.}”

\textbf{AMADY GAGIGO, HelpMeSee Patient}

Amady and his family at home with his 21-year-old daughter Daba and his 25-year-old son, Malick. His father into the carving trade saw at many of the local markets. Much of his family lives together in Banjul, including several grandchildren. This is one of the most common local arts in The Gambia, and craftsmen like Amady can be seen at many of the local markets.

When we launched our campaign in The Gambia in the fall of 2015, Amady was one of the first patients to receive care. Several days after surgery, we caught up with Amady and his family again to see how he was recovering. Just days after he visited the hospital, he was ready to get back to his work. He was recovering just days after the operation; “I feel very well. Thank you.”

\textbf{AMADY GAGIGO, HelpMeSee Patient}
In 2015, HelpMeSee raised a total of $20,104,580 in revenue, with significant support coming from the Ueltschi Foundation as well as contributions from our joint fundraising efforts with HelpAge India.

We are extremely grateful for the generosity of all our donors and the support of our volunteers and partners — our work is made possible thanks to them.

To see our audited financial statements visit helpmesee.org.