Ethiopia

Invest in Sight. Transform a Nation.

A rare opportunity to end
a global problem.

The **Fred Hollows**
Foundation

More than 1 billion people live with vision loss that could have been prevented or is treatable. Without urgent action, that number will rise to 1.7 billion by 2050.

For more than 30 years, The Fred Hollows Foundation has worked to end avoidable blindness and restore sight; transforming lives, economies, and communities.

We've proven that change at scale is possible.

In Vietnam, it took three decades of partnership to build a national eye health system that now meets 90% of cataract needs and has eliminated trachoma.

Our next frontier: scaling impact.

To meet this moment, The Foundation is focusing its next phase of growth on nine countries across three regions where the need is greatest, the environment is enabling, and the potential for system-wide transformation is real.

A proven model for scale

In 1992, when The Foundation first started working in Vietnam, there were only two ophthalmologists who could perform modern cataract surgery.

Only 50 cataract surgeries were performed each year, despite around 1 million people needing it.

Today, Vietnam's 97 million people have near universal access to eye health and each year around 350,000 cataract surgeries are performed by more than 1,000 surgeons.

Our model in Vietnam proves that partnership, leadership, and investment can transform entire health systems.

1992-2000

Laying the foundations

- Fred Hollows begins training local ophthalmologists ("teach the teachers first").
- Hundreds of surgeons were trained in modern cataract surgery.
- Early system building with intraocular lenses (IOLs) and essential tools.

2000-2015

Expanding reach

- National outreach programs and clinics were established.
- Community health workers were trained to bring services closer to people.
- Major gains: 70% cataract surgery coverage and greater than 80% access to glasses.

2015-2025

Integration and sustainability

- Eye health embedded in national education and health systems.
- Sustainable funding via national insurance schemes.
- 350,000+ cataract surgeries performed annually.
- 60% of infrastructure funded by Vietnamese partners.
- Transition to full government leadership underway.
- Close to universal health coverage.
- Trachoma eliminated.

Vietnam led the way — Ethiopia is next

Ethiopia: an urgent opportunity

With 135 million people and vast rural areas, Ethiopia faces one of the world's highest burdens of avoidable blindness. Cataracts are the leading cause, and trachoma rates are the highest globally. The Foundation works in Oromia — the most populous region — and the epicentre of need.

Cataract is the leading cause of blindness in Ethiopia and the world, responsible for almost half of all cases.

Entirely curable with a short, low-cost surgery. Yet more than **1,000,000~ Ethiopians are waiting for treatment.**

8.8 million
people live with vision loss

Trachoma is the world's leading infectious cause of blindness. Without intervention, it leads to painful, irreversible blindness.**.**

It thrives where poverty, poor sanitation, and lack of clean water persist. **59% of the world's cases are found in Ethiopia.**

59%
of the world's trachoma cases

Refractive error is the world's leading cause of vision impairment and affects an estimated 671 million people worldwide.

Easily fixed with glasses**, but millions in rural areas can't access a simple eye test.**

1,000,000~
people waiting for cataract surgery in Ethiopia

Diabetic retinopathy is a leading cause of blindness among working-age adults and is a growing endemic.

Health workers lack the training and tools to detect it early. **A growing cause of blindness among working-age adults as diabetes rates rise.**

$428 million
is lost every year in productivity in Ethiopia due to poor vision

Ethiopia

Africa’s second-most populous country with an estimated ~135 million people in 2025.

Development challenges include:

- Poverty and food insecurity
- Vast rural areas, inequitable access to healthcare
- Infrastructure gaps
- Burden of preventable disease skewed towards poorer, remote communities
- Political fragility

Epicentre of need: Oromia

- Largest and most populous region, home to about one-third of the country’s population.
- Contains vast rural and pastoralist communities where eye disease prevalence is highest and access to care is lowest.
- More than 27 million people in Oromia live in trachoma-endemic areas.

Weak health systems are holding back progress.

Severe workforce and infrastructure shortages

Ethiopia has only **1.2** ophthalmologists per million people (WHO recommends 4 per million). Many rural hospitals lack essentials tools and medicines.

Chronic underfunding

Only US $28 per person is spent on health each year — far below global standards — leaving eye care under-resourced and donor-dependent.

Low quality eye care services

Training gaps and limited follow-up mean eye care outcomes remain inconsistent, especially in rural areas.

But change is within reach. Now is the time to act.

Our existing footprint and momentum

- **Our programs and partners are strong.** We have provided more than 780,000 surgeries, millions of screenings and hundreds of trained ophthalmic.
- **Leadership in disease elimination** and systems strengthening, with learnings from success in other countries.
- **Deep presence and commitments** in the Oromia region which has the highest burden in the country.

Strong Government partnership and readiness

A trusted, long-term partner of the Ethiopian Ministry of Health, The Foundation is supporting the rollout of the National Eye Health Strategic Plan (2024–2026) — aligned with WHO's global vision goals. Ethiopia is committed to expanding eye health under its national plan — embedding Integrated People-Centred Eye Care (IPEC), Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) and Safeguarding principles, backed by training, equipment procurement and national campaigns.

Investment needed to halve the cataract backlog and eliminate trachoma in Oromia by 2030

Total FHF Investment to date in Ethiopia

US $66M

Funding committed as of Feb 2026

US $21M

Funding Gap: Additional funding needed to halve the cataract backlog and eliminate trachoma

US $75.6M

Help us raise

US $75.6M

to close the funding gap

US $96.6M

Total investment by 2030

Investment needed to halve the cataract backlog and eliminate trachoma in Oromia by 2030

Total FHF Investment to date in Ethiopia

AU $101M

Funding committed as of Feb 2026

AU $30M

Funding Gap: Additional funding needed to halve the cataract backlog and eliminate trachoma

AU $111M

Help us raise

AU $111M

to close the funding gap

AU $141.2M

Total investment by 2030

How do we get there?

We have a bold vision.

By 2030, we want to halve the cataract backlog and eliminate trachoma in Oromia, Ethiopia.

01

Treat

Halve the cataract backlog by **165,000 people.**

02

Train

Build the future workforce by training **4,985** people.

03

Equip

Improve eye care infrastructure, supplies, products and technologies.

04

Eliminate

End trachoma for **18 million** people at risk.

How we will scale and sustain this impact

Proven, cost-effective solutions delivered through coordinated outreach, hospital upgrades and workforce training.

Government ownership driving integration into schools and primary care.

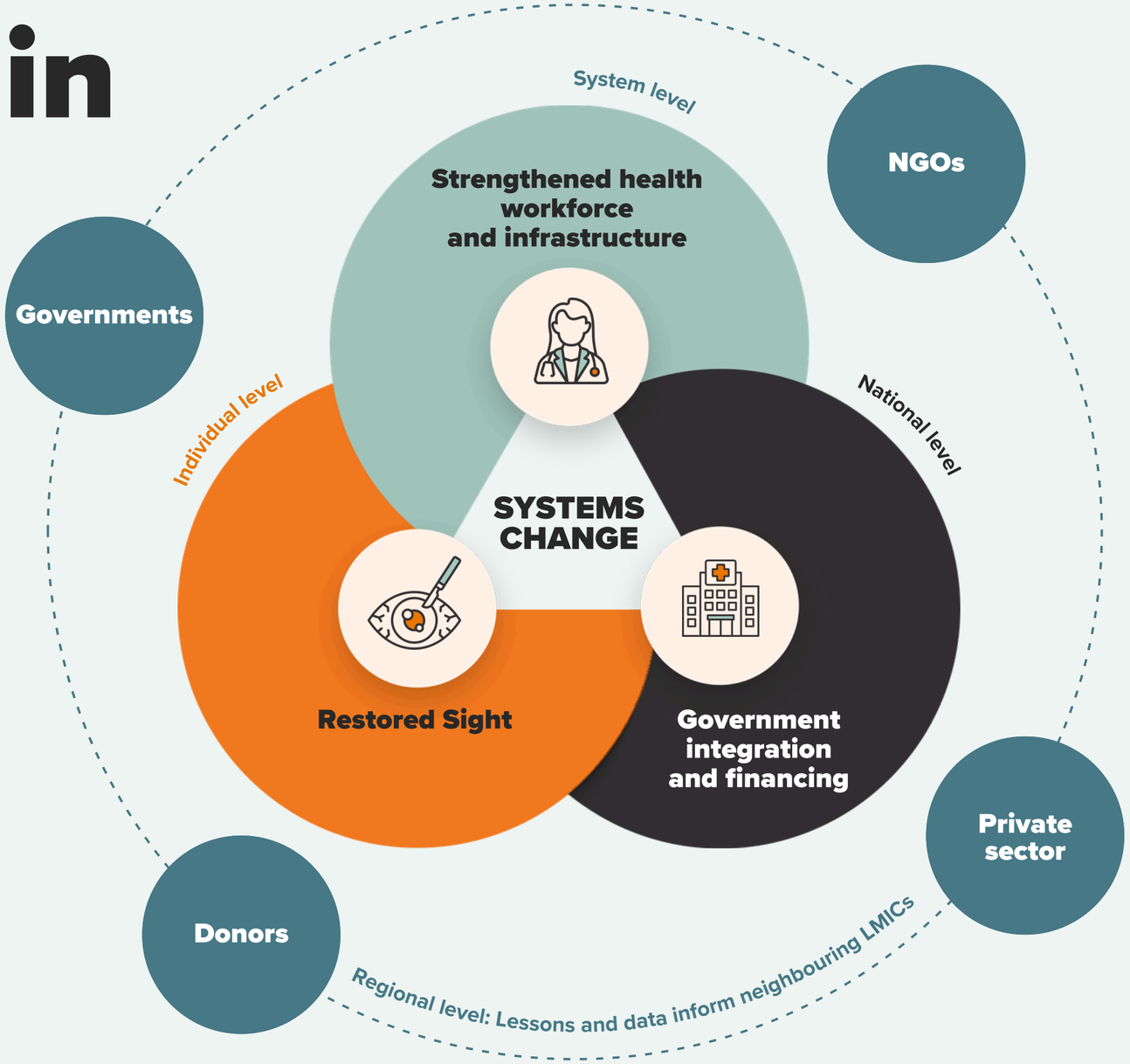
Smarter delivery systems reducing costs and boosting efficiency through innovation and better use of resources.

Why we invest in more than just surgeries

Ending avoidable blindness requires fixing the system that makes blindness so prevalent in the first place, not just delivering surgeries.

For a cataract operation to happen, three things must align: **the right team, in the right place, with the right equipment.** When even one link in this chain is broken, people go without care.

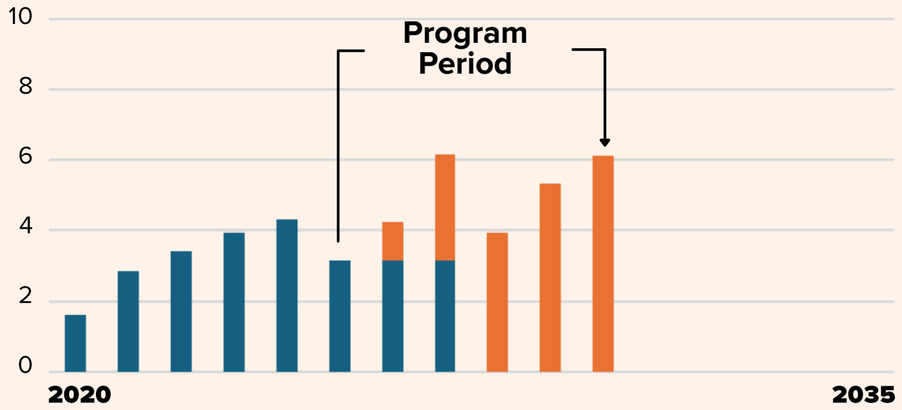
By investing in systems change and taking a sector-wide approach, we're not just restoring sight for individuals today, we're building a sustainable, self-reliant eye care system that will serve millions for generations to come.



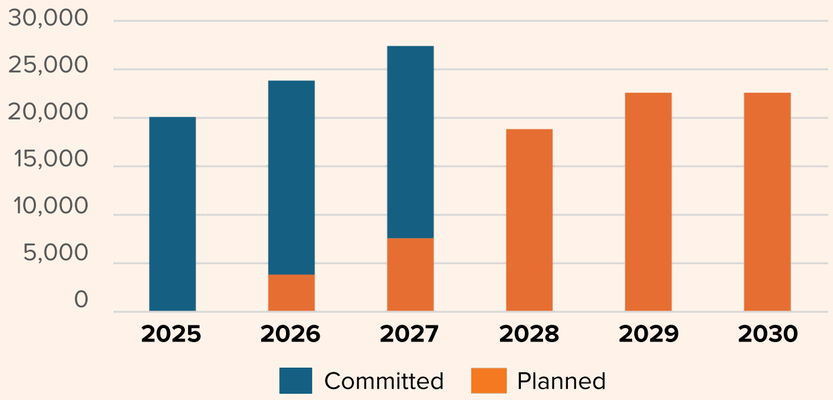
USD

How we'll halve the cataract backlog

$34.5 million investment required between 2026 and 2030



to directly restore the sight of more than 165,000 people who may otherwise go blind



What your funding will contribute to

$21m 165,000 cataract surgeries directly subsidised by The Foundation and >25% higher Cataract Surgical Rate overall

$3.2m Screening 876,200 people for refractive error and 900,000 for cataract and other eye conditions

$1.4m Programme management, M&E, reporting, technical advisory and other programme management costs

$0.9m Full spectrum eyecare training for 50 ophthalmic nurses, 65 optometrists and 150 IECW, as well as basic eye health promotion and prevention training for 800 HEWs

$3.4m Strengthening eye care medical supplies and distributing 100,296 glasses

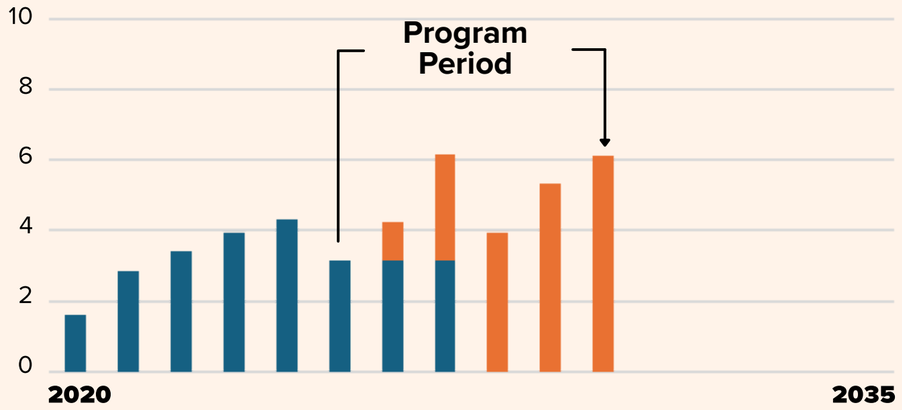
$1.9m Establishing 2 Primary Eye Care Units (PECUs), renovating Secondary Eye Care Units (SECU) in Oromia, establishing diagnostic tele medicine in 10 SECUs and connect with 1 TECU

* All financial figures are estimates and subject to change based on exchange rates, market conditions and program delivery variables.
** 2025 figure includes 25,000 surgeries expected in 2025 as part of The Foundation's ongoing programs.

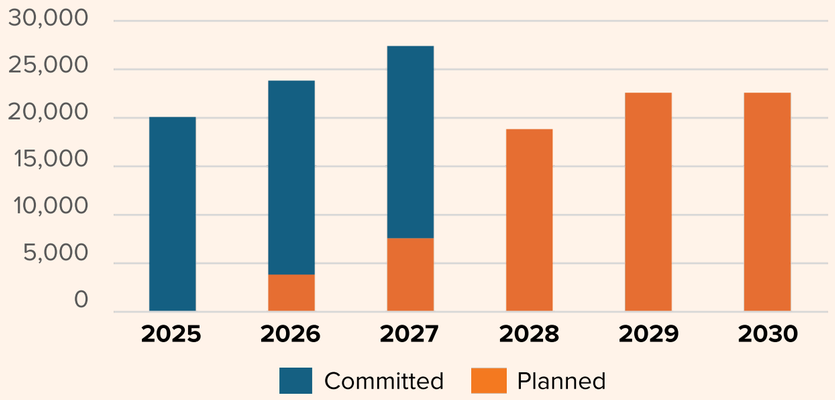
AUD

How we'll halve the cataract backlog

$52.4 million investment required between 2026 and 2030



to directly restore the sight of more than 165,000 people who may otherwise go blind



What your funding will contribute to

$32m 165,000 cataract surgeries directly subsidised by The Foundation and >25% higher Cataract Surgical Rate overall

$5.4m Screening 876,200 people for refractive error and 900,000 for cataract and other eye conditions

$2.2m Programme management, M&E, reporting, technical advisory and other programme management costs

$1.4m Full spectrum eyecare training for 50 ophthalmic nurses, 65 optometrists and 150 IECW, as well as basic eye health promotion and prevention training for 800 HEWs

$5.3m Strengthening eye care medical supplies and distributing 100,296 glasses

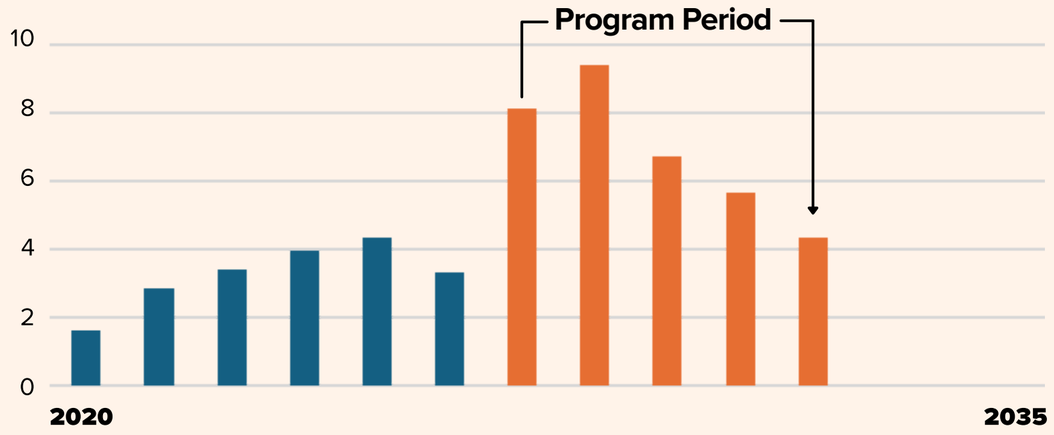
$2.9m Establishing 2 Primary Eye Care Units (PECUs), renovating Secondary Eye Care Units (SECU) in Oromia, establishing diagnostic tele medicine in 10 SECUs and connect with 1 TECU

* All financial figures are estimates and subject to change based on exchange rates, market conditions and program delivery variables.
** 2025 figure includes 25,000 surgeries expected in 2025 as part of The Foundation's ongoing programs.

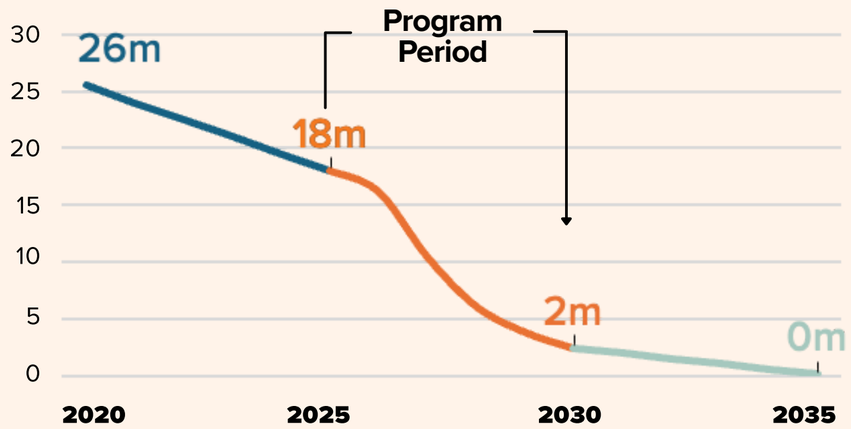
USD

How we'll eliminate trachoma

US $62 million investment required between 2026 and 2030...



...to administer antibiotics to 16 million people and perform 32,250 TT surgeries for people at risk.



What your funding will contribute to

$6m Conducting 32,250 Trachomatous Trichiasis (TT) surgeries, including training of relevant personnel

$8m Conducting 250 Trachoma Impact Surveys (TIS) and 106 Trachoma Surveillance Surveys (TSS)

$3.1m Programme management, M&E, reporting, technical advisory and other programme management costs.

$33m Embedding facial and environmental (F&E) wash across 580 districts

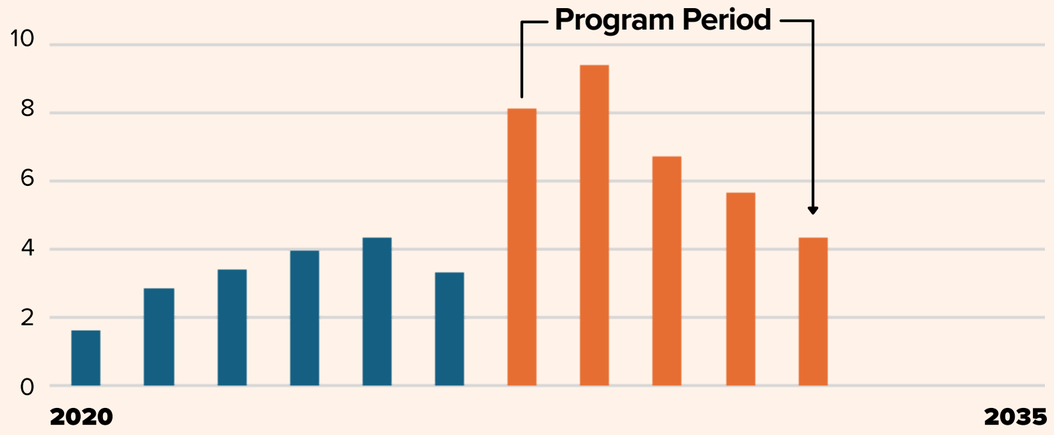
$14m Supporting 250 mass drug administrations (MDA), distributing 16m antibiotics

* All financial figures are estimates and subject to change based on exchange rates, market conditions and program delivery variables.

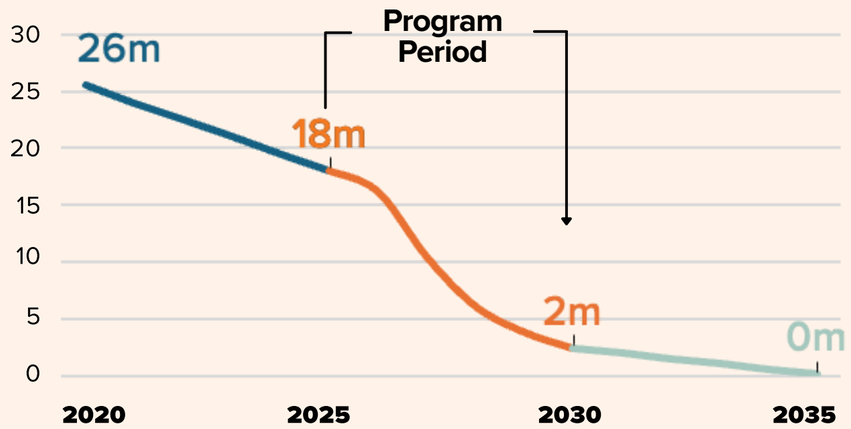
AUD

How we'll eliminate trachoma

A $94 million investment is required between 2026 and 2030...



...to administer antibiotics to 16 million people and perform 32,250 Trachomatous Trichiasis (TT) surgeries for people at risk.



What your funding will contribute to

$9.2m Conducting 32,250 TT surgeries, including training of releant personnel

$12.3m Conducting 250 Trachoma Impact Surveys (TIS) and 106 Trachoma Surveillance Surveys (TSS)

$4.8m Programme management, M&E, reporting, technical advisory and other programme management costs.

$50m Embedding facial and environmental (F&E) wash across 580 districts

$21m Supporting 250 mass drug administrations (MDA), distributing more than 16m antibiotics

* All financial figures are estimates and subject to change based on exchange rates, market conditions and program delivery variables.

Investment in sight. Investment in life.

For years, **Bashadu** from Ethiopia's Oromia region lived in near darkness.

After an illness left her unable to work, cataract took her sight and with it, her independence. Unable to afford treatment or travel, she spent her days confined to her small home, relying on her daughter and neighbours to guide her.

But now, through sight-restoring surgery made possible by The Fred Hollows Foundation, **Bashadu's world has opened once again.**

With her vision restored, she can walk to church on her own, tend to her home, and rejoin her community with confidence.

Her story is more than one woman's recovery; it is a glimpse of what's possible for hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians waiting for the same chance.

When sight is restored, independence returns, families thrive, and entire communities begin to see a brighter future.

> "Being independent is important to me."
> — **Bashadu**

Older people like Bashadu, who face significant barriers in accessing eye care in Oromia province, are being reached through outreach visits led by the Oromia Regional Health Bureau with the support of the University of Jimma and The Foundation.

Investment in sight. Investment in life.

For two long years, **Semira**, a young mother from Dedo in Oromia, endured the relentless pain and itching of trachoma. She knew that, without treatment, she would one day go blind but fear of surgery and the daily struggle to feed her children kept her from seeking help.

When the Foundation-supported outreach team arrived in her village, everything changed. **For the first time, Semira had access to safe, trusted care close to home**. The simple surgery took less than 20 minutes and transformed her future.

Today, the pain that once ruled her life is gone. **Semira can work, care for her children, and look ahead** to a future she once feared she'd never see. What seemed like a small medical intervention has given her back her independence, her confidence, and her hope.

> "When my husband comes back home, he will find me home as good as a bride would look."
>
> **— Semira**

In Semira's region of Oromia province, local people – who are mostly farming the land to make a living – face significant barriers to access eye health services.

The return on your investment

Your investment will generate substantial economic and social returns — an evidence-based conviction grounded in analysis by The Foundation and its partners, reinforced by leading academic research.

In Ethiopia, every US $1 invested returns US $5 in benefits.

Improved learning

Close the learning gap by up to 50% for children experiencing vision impairment

Reduced caregiving burden

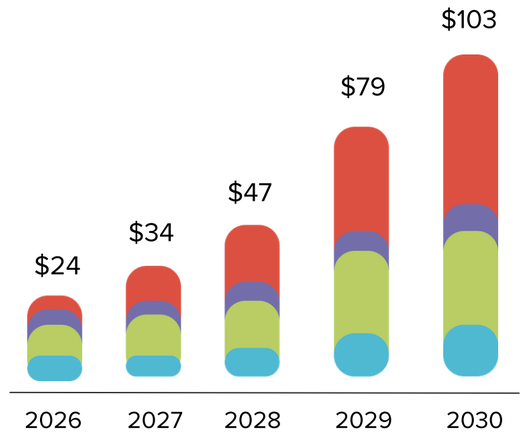
Free up caregiver time for employment and other productive activities

Improved productivity

Boost productivity or income by up to 10% for those with mild and near vision impairment

Increased employment

Increase employment for those with MSVI or blindness, who are 30% less likely to secure employment vs. those with unimpaired vision



Cumulative return on cataract investment of $29.7m. Numbers are in USD

Fewer road crashes

Save lives and prevent injuries by reducing the risk of road traffic accidents by up to 50%

662 traffic injuries averted
33 traffic deaths averted

Improved mental health

Reduce depression among individuals with vision impairment and caregivers

7,245 cases of depression averted

(25% of affected individuals experience depression)

Increased longevity

Reduced risk of mortality and comorbidities, particularly among those aged 65-74

245 years of life gained
33 additional deaths averted

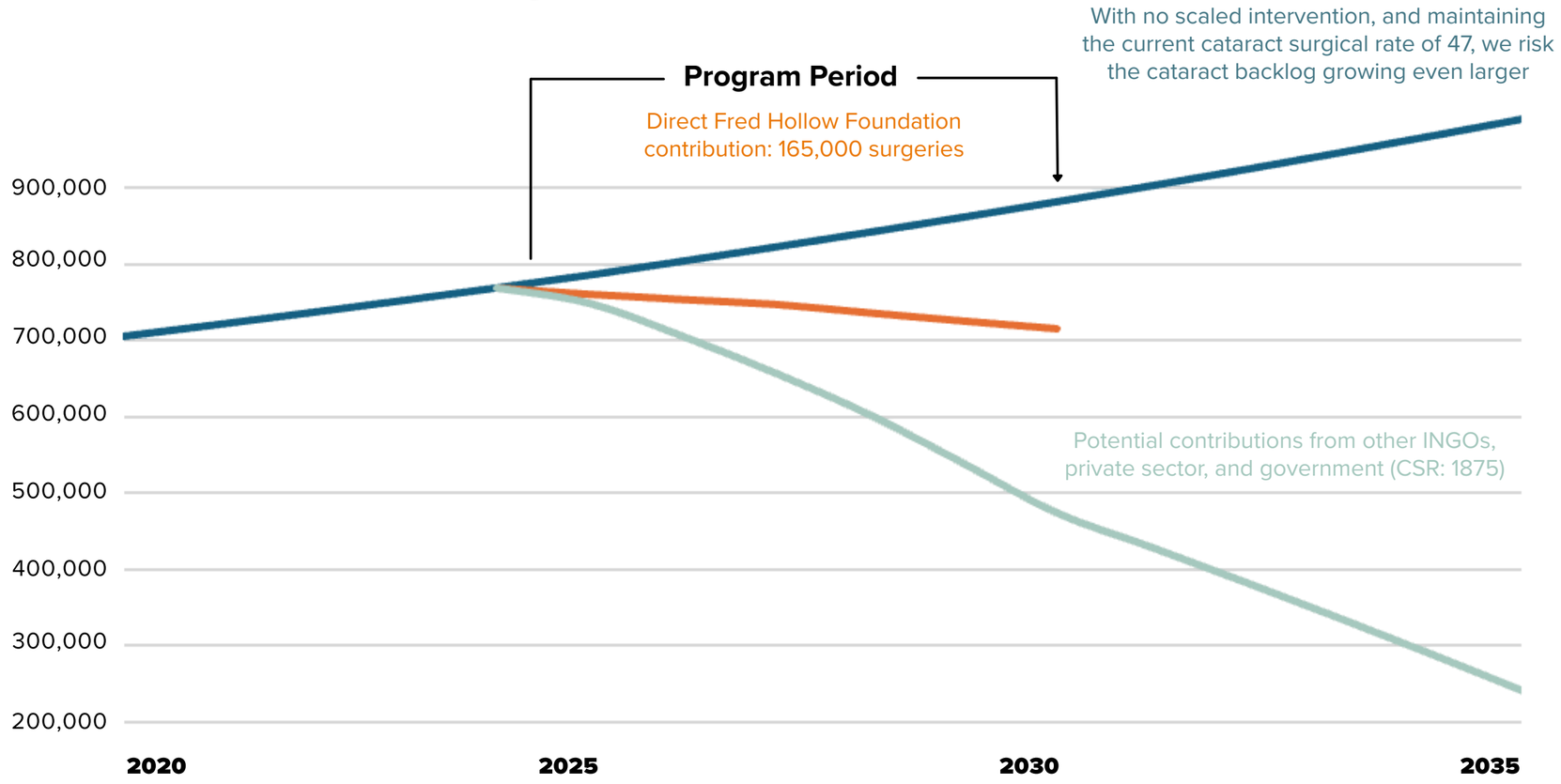
Your impact

Your impact will go even further than restoring sight to 165,000 people.

Your investment goes into training, infrastructure and leadership, which will not only create benefits in Oromia, but across all of the Ethiopian health system.

This could impact an additional 60,000 people per year.

With the support of the government, private sector and other NGOs to strengthen the whole health system, the cataract backlog will be addressed across the rest of the country, too.



Overall efforts to improve the eye health system aim to increase Cataract Surgical Rate (CSR) from 1400 to 1875 by 2030, for an additional 50-60,000 surgeries per year.

An investment in sight
is an investment
in health,
in equity,
and in the economy.

It’s an investment in the lives of millions.
The time to act is now.

Thank You

The **Fred Hollows** Foundation

Appendix

Additional slides for optional inclusion by The Foundation as required, based on previous or more detailed versions of slides in this pack.

About us

Who we are

The Fred Hollows Foundation (The Foundation) is a leading international development organisation working to end avoidable blindness. Inspired by the vision of the late **Professor Fred Hollows**, we believe that everyone — no matter where they live or how much they earn — has the right to quality eye care.

Our approach

We focus on **long-term systems change**—not one-off surgeries. By empowering local communities, investing in health infrastructure, and influencing national policies, we help countries take ownership of their eye-health futures.

Our mission

To restore sight, strengthen local health systems, and create lasting change by training and equipping local doctors, nurses and health workers.

“Quote here, insert text here, xxxx xxxxxx xxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxxx xxxx xxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxx xxxx.”

— **Fred Hollows**

Our impact

3m+
people have had their sight restored since 1992

439k+
health workers trained

132m+
antibiotics for trachoma supplied

1.5m+
cataract operations

25+
countries where we work to build sustainable eye-health systems

200+
local partners strengthening national capacity and healthcare infrastructure

REMOVE THIS COMMENT PRIOR TO SHARING - SLIDE FOR CORPORATE PACK (GLOBAL)

An investment that’s also good for your business

Reputation and storytelling

A powerful, human-centred impact story that brings ESG commitments to life — visible, relatable, and backed by credible data.

Shared value creation

Investing in sight creates stronger, healthier communities and markets that benefit the broader economy and supply chains.

ESG leadership

Eye health investment aligns with multiple UN Sustainable Development Goals and demonstrates measurable ESG impact under “S” and “G”

Strengthens employee pride and engagement

Powerful storytelling for internal communications, volunteering, and brand culture.

Enhances brand trust and visibility

Stand alongside an internationally recognised partner with deep government relationships and a 30-year track record of impact in over 25 countries.

REMOVE THIS COMMENT PRIOR TO SHARING - SLIDE FOR CORPORATE PACK (AUS)

An investment that’s also good for your business

Enhances brand trust and visibility

Championing an iconic Australian organisation delivering life-changing outcomes across Australia, Africa and Asia.

Aligns with Australia’s global leadership in eye health

Showcasing Australian values and expertise in sustainable development and healthcare innovation on the global stage.

Shared value creation

Investing in sight creates stronger, healthier communities and markets that benefit the broader economy and supply chains.

Strengthens employee pride and engagement

Powerful storytelling for internal communications, volunteering, and brand culture.

Demonstrates authentic ESG leadership

Credible, measurable, and deeply connected to Australia’s legacy of innovation and compassion.

… and contributes to advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Ending avoidable blindness is not just a health intervention — it's a catalyst for progress across multiple global goals.

> "Vision is the golden thread that weaves through the Sustainable Development Goals."
>
> **— The Lancet Global Health Commission on Eye Health (2021)**

SDG 1 – No Poverty
Restoring sight enables people to work, earn, and escape poverty cycles. Eye health strengthens household resilience and local economies.

SDG 3 – Good Health & Wellbeing
Integrates eye care into national health systems, improving access to quality, affordable healthcare for all.

SDG 4 – Quality Education
Children can learn when they and their caregivers have healthy vision — reducing absenteeism and improving literacy outcomes.

SDG 5 – Gender Equality
Women and girls—55% of those with vision loss—gain independence, mobility, and opportunity when sight is restored.

SDG 8 – Decent Work & Economic Growth
Increases workforce participation and productivity; every $1 invested yields ~$28 in economic return.

SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities
Strengthens healthcare access in rural and underserved communities, addressing geographic and income inequities.

SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals
Strengthens collaboration among governments, NGOs, donors, and the private sector to deliver sustainable systems change.

Our role in eye health

Brokering and convening

Building on our existing partners and expanding to work with other sectors, including education, transport and private sector.

Research and innovation

Utilising our world-class research to build the evidence needed for advocacy and policy changes, including research like our investment case.

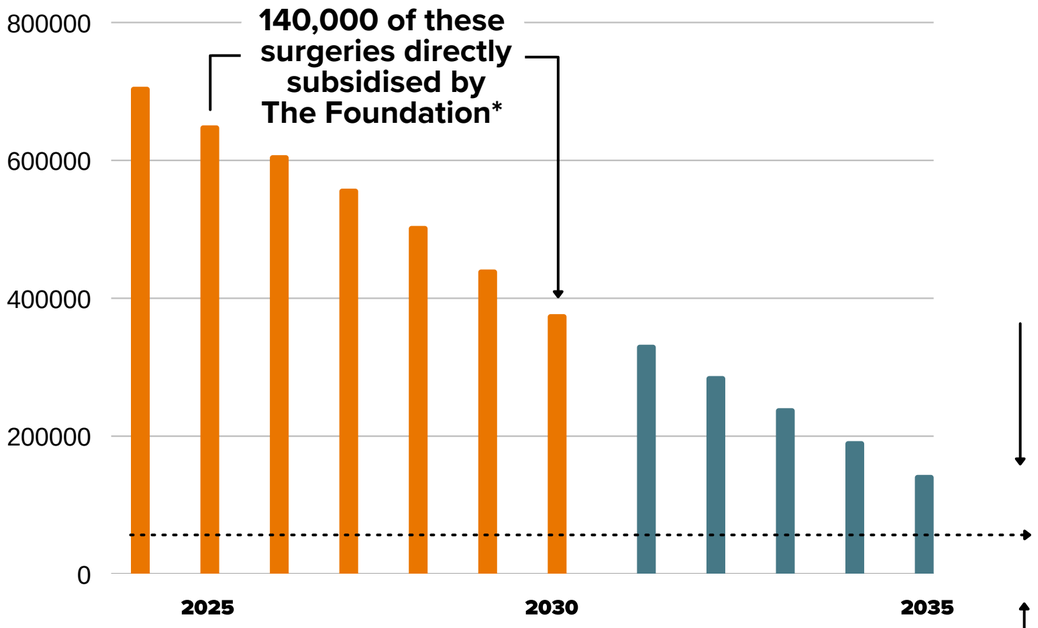
Technical expertise

Leveraging our local and global expertise in health economics, clinical quality, health system improvement. We advise on policy and implementation at the county and national levels.

Scaling impact requires direct interventions and holistic improvements to Oromia's health system

Cataract backlog in Oromia

ILLUSTRATIVE



Reducing the cataract backlog

Reduce the backlog of people waiting for cataract surgery to a sustainable 'steady state'.

Steady State Supply = Incidence

Improve the eye health system

Build the eye health system, including leadership and governance, workforce, and financing mechanisms, to sustainably manage new cases (incidence).

If we only focused on backlog, the cataract case load would not be sustainable, and the backlog would eventually revert.

**2025 figure includes 25,000 surgeries expected in 2025 as part of The Foundation's ongoing programs. Fundraising period objective is 140,000 The Foundation-subsidised surgeries over 2026-2030. Overall efforts to improve the eye health system aim to increase Cataract Surgical Rate (CSR) from 1400 to 1875 by 2030, for an additional 50-60,000 surgeries per year.*

What are the issues?

In 15 minutes, sight can be restored — but millions are still waiting.

Cataract

The world's leading cause of blindness, responsible for almost half of all cases. A simple 15-minute surgery can restore sight, The backlog of untreated cataract cases is now estimated to exceed **one million people**, many of them in rural and remote areas.

Refractive error

The leading cause of vision impairment and affects an estimated 671 million people worldwide. Economic loss from one year of Uncorrected Refractive Error in School Children is $591 million.

Diabetic retinopathy

A growing cause of blindness and vision impairment, and is the only eye condition for which overall prevalence has increased significantly since 1990.

Trachoma

The world's leading **infectious** cause of blindness, remains endemic in parts of Ethiopia. It thrives where poverty, limited sanitation, and lack of clean water persist — disproportionately affecting women and children. Without intervention, it leads to painful, irreversible blindness that can devastate families and communities.

Barriers to access

Beyond these diseases, systemic challenges undermine eye-health delivery: too few specialists, weak supply chains, low public awareness, and limited integration of eye care into national health systems. For people in rural areas, the nearest eye clinic can be hours or even days away.

Eliminating vision impairment globally

could generate annual benefits at least as large as...

$447 billion
in economic gain annually

79,800
deaths averted from traffic crashes or older adults

22 million
people gaining employment

1.2 million
non-fatal traffic injuries prevented

304 million
people relieved of caregiving

~320,000
added in years of life

13 million
equivalent school years gained

12.2 million
cases of depression averted

In Oromia, Ethiopia:

US $57 million

invested in eye health
over the next 5 years

will deliver

(USD)

US $286 million

In economic benefits

As well as:

35,446
learning years gained

662
traffic injuries averted

7,245
cases of depression averted

245
Years of life gained

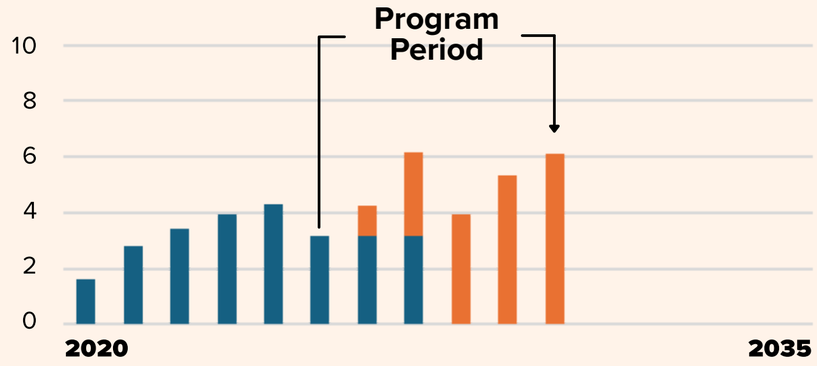
33
traffic deaths averted

33
additional deaths averted

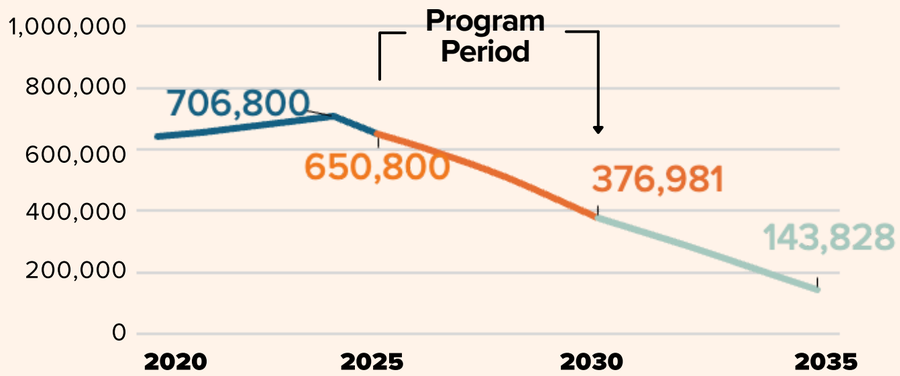
What we aim to achieve

Treat

Halve the cataract backlog by **350,000** people.
$19.5 million investment required by 2030...

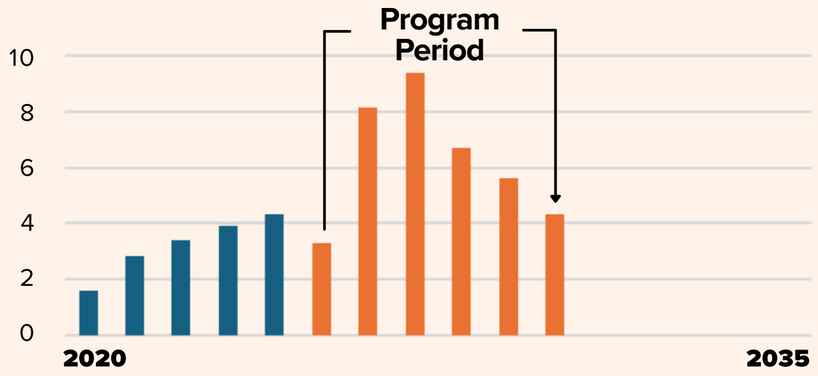


...to reduce backlog of people requiring or waiting for cataract surgery to get closer to a target 'steady state'.

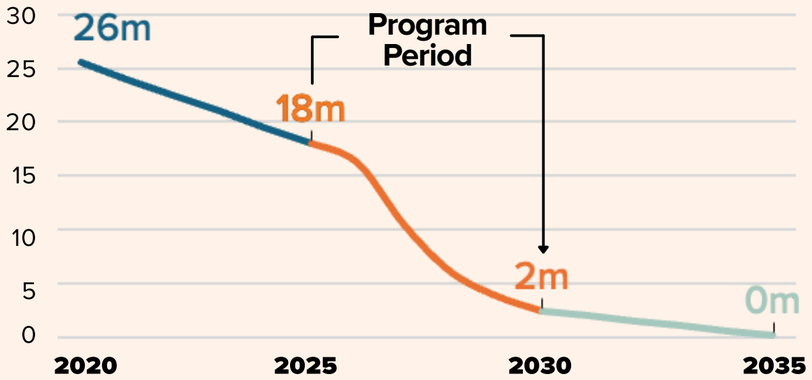


Eliminate

End trachoma for **18 million** people at risk.
$37.5 million investment required by 2030...



...to administer antibiotics to 16 million people and perform 32,250 TT surgeries for those who are at the greatest risk of trachoma.



Supported by Train and Equip

What our plan requires

US $57M TOTAL

Treat (Cataract)

US $19.5 million investment required by 2030

	$7.6m	165,000 cataract surgeries directly subsidised by The Foundation and >25% higher Cataract Surgical Rate overall
	$2.8m	Screening 876,200 people for refractive error and 900,000 for cataract and other eye conditions
Train	**$1.2m**	Providing personnel and managing on-the-ground operations
	$0.8m	Full spectrum eyecare training for 50 ophthalmic nurses, 65 optometrists and 150 IECW, as well as basic eye health promotion and prevention training for 800 HEWs
Equip	**$2.9m**	Strengthening eye care medical supplies and distributing 100,296 glasses
	$1.7m	Establishing 2 Primary Eye Care Units (PECUs), renovating Secondary Eye Care Units (SECU) in Oromia, establishing diagnostic tele medicine in 10 SECUs and connect with 1 TECU
	$2.6m	Indirect, overhead, and other costs

Eliminate (Trachoma)

US $37.5 million investment required by 2030

	$6.7m	Conducting 32,250 Trachomatous Trichiasis (TT) surgeries
	$8.4m	Conducting 250 Trachoma Impact Surveys (TIS) and 106 Trachoma Surveillance Surveys (TSS)
Train	**$2.5m**	Providing personnel and managing on-the-ground operations
Equip	**$8.1m**	Embedding facial and environmental (F&E) wash across 580 districts
	$6.6m	Supporting 250 mass drug administrations (MDA), distributing 16m antibiotics
	$5.1m	Indirect, overhead, and other costs

What will be your impact?

Your investment will have significant economic and social returns – a conviction driven by analysis from The Foundation and its partners, supported by academic research.

Transforming Lives: An investment
case for eye health
(2023)

The Value of Vision:
The case for investing in eye health
(2025)

In Oromia, Ethiopia, every US $1 invested returns US $5 in benefits

Transforms lives instantly
A 15-minute cataract surgery restores sight, independence, and dignity.

Fewer road crashes
Save lives and prevent injuries by reducing the risk of road traffic accidents by up to 50%.

Improved mental health
Reduce depression among individuals with vision impairment and caregivers (25% of affected individuals experience depression).

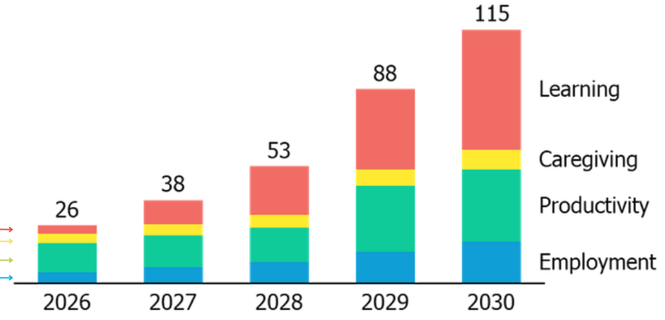
Increased longevity
Reduced risk of mortality and comorbidities, particularly among those aged 65-74.

Improved learning
Close the learning gap by up to 50% for children experiencing vision impairment.

Reduced caregiving burden
Free up caregiver time for employment and other productive activities.

Improved productivity
Boost productivity or income by up to 10% for those with mild and near vision impairment.

Increased employment
Increase employment for those with MSVI or blindness, who are 30% less likely to secure employment vs. those with unimpaired vision.



Economic impact, USD millions

Input to investment slide

Investment
to date

$66m

Funding secured from
Bloomberg Philanthropies

$9.5m

Funding committed
Matching grant

$2.5m

$2.5m

*(matched dollar
for dollar)*

Additional funding
required

$37m

$57M

Notes

Page 11 – Estimated benefits are scaled based on The Foundation/IAPB Vision Atlas investment case for Ethiopia, where USD20.5 million in investment produces USD103 million in economic benefits as well as the associated social and health benefits. Funding requirements for The Foundation's programs in Ethiopia are expected to be USD57.0 million (2.50x the IAPB case), and benefits are thus scaled by 2.50x. Economic impact is illustrative based on estimated costs for cataract and trachoma programs in Oromia, Ethiopia, and modelling from the *The Value of Vision (2025)* report. ROI of 5 is considered conservative, versus The Foundation/IAPB projections of an ROI of 28 for a large scale, global program and academic studies' (Wong B, Singh K, Everett B, et. Al. 2023) median ex-post ROI of 20 for small and medium scale eye care programs. All figures expressed in US dollars and assume 1.517 AUD/USD (2024 average).

Page 12,13 - Cost figures are based on estimated costs for programs in Oromia, Ethiopia and assume surgical costs rise in line with Ethiopia's average last twelve months (LTM) inflation rate (15%). LTM was selected over 3- and 5-year averages, as inflation over these periods was significantly impacted by exogeneous factors such as COVID and global conflicts. All figures expressed in US dollars and assume 1.554 AUD/USD (LTM average). 2025 figures include programs which are already active, e.g., 25,000 cataract surgeries expected in 2025, USD 3.4 million budget for trachoma programs in 2025.

Economic analysis resources:

Transforming Lives: An investment
case for eye health
(2023)

The Value of Vision:
The case for investing in eye health
(2025)

Our success in Vietnam

In 1992, when The Foundation first started working in Vietnam, there were **only 2 ophthalmologists** in the country able to conduct modern cataract surgeries.

At that time, around 1 million Vietnamese people needed cataract surgery and only 50 surgeries were performed a year.

Today, Vietnam's 97 million people have near universal access to eye health.

Each year around 250,000 cataract surgeries are performed by **more than 1,000 surgeons**.

1992

2025

Now the path to eradicating avoidable blindness in Vietnam is clear.

Vision loss robs children of learning, adults of livelihoods, and families of time, memories and income. An estimated **$1.1 trillion** lost in productivity annually in low- and middle-income countries.

Unlike many complex health or development issues, we know the solutions. The interventions already exist and are proven, affordable, and easy to implement.

Eye health is one of the best investments in global health — **every US $1 invested returns US $28 in benefits**.

Women and girls bear a disproportionate burden of blindness.

In Ethiopia and other low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), women make up over half of all people with vision loss. This is because gender inequality compounds both the risk and the consequences of blindness.

When a woman loses her sight, she is less able to earn an income, care for her children, or participate in community life — and her daughters often leave school to become caregivers.

With elevated support from donors, The Foundation will have additional capacity to reduce these barriers. Women who regain sight experience improved safety, literacy, income, and independence — strengthening families and communities.

How The Foundation is responding

- Embedding gender equity in every program
- Creating safe, women-friendly outreach clinics
- Partnering with women's networks to raise awareness
- Training health workers in gender sensitivity and inclusion

The Foundation has also partnered with UN Women to prepare a Joint Policy Brief on Gender Equity and Eye Health. Based on consultations with women across the world, the brief identifies four key areas for change: voice, representation, resources and rights.

Invest in Sight. Empower a Nation.

Your help will enable our shared eye health work to go further faster.

The **Fred Hollows** Foundation