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PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SOWETO RESIDENTS RECEIVE FREE EYETESTING AND GLASSES

Over 550 residents in Soweto were given the opportunity of free eye testing at a three-day vision care clinic where optometrists conducted eye testing in order to assess vision care needs and dispense spectacles.

The beneficiaries of the project included a seamstress who battled to thread needles, an elderly couple unable to read for decades and a woman who lost her self-confidence and had to drop out of school because she couldn't afford to replace her broken glasses.

This project is an initiative of OneSight South Africa, an independent non-profit organisation committed to helping the world see better and eradicating the vision care crisis for good. This clinic was conducted in partnership with national NGO, Khulisa Social Solutions, whose focus, through multiple interventions, is on promoting community cohesion.

Says Lameez Eskteen Country Manager of OneSight: “Clear vision is a vital part of daily life. It is a part of our independence, productivity and learning, yet 1 in 7 people in this world lack vision care due to financial or geographical constraints. This needs to change and we are committed to changing it.”

“Together with our donor and Khulisa, we were able to bring our globally successful Community Engagement clinic to Soweto,” continued Eksteen.

Eight Khulisa staff members were trained by OneSight to conduct pre-screening assessments in order to ensure that the beneficiaries identified are truly eligible for the spectacles valued at approximately R3000.00 per unit.

Once the optometrists have conducted the tests, scripts are sent to OneSight's lab whereafter the glasses will be dispensed by Khulisa to all participants within approximately six weeks after the screening.

“Over the years we've learnt from the patients we've served that vision care is not just a health related intervention, but a life-changing intervention,” adds Eksteen.

“Some people have lost jobs because of deteriorating eye sight, learners have struggled at school because 80% of learning is visual so if they cannot see clearly they simply cannot learn properly, infact vision care has a direct correlation with 8 out of 17 of the sustainable development goals” Eksteen continued.

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Beneficiaries ranged between the ages of 7 and 77, many of whom had never had the benefit of free eye examinations and bespoke corrective spectacles.

Says Lesley Ann van Selm, Managing Director of Khulisa: “Together with OneSight are changing lives and the community by creating opportunities for our beneficiaries to gain access to vision care that has previously been a barrier to their ability to work or learn.”

The initiative is made possible by Sunglass Hut and Luxottica and offered at absolutely no cost to the beneficiaries. This is the first in a series of a total of 6 Community clinics that will be rolled out across South Africa this year. The next clinic in Gauteng will take place in June and pre-screening dates will be communicated via the media and our partner Ray’s of Hope in the coming weeks.

For more information about OneSight visit their website www.onesight.org.

Photo caption: Gogo Anastasia Mulaudzi started experiencing vision problems in 2007 but could never afford to access vision care as she supports an entire household from her pension.

About OneSight:

OneSight is a leading global nonprofit dedicated to creating a world where lack of access to vision care is no longer a barrier to human achievement and potential. From one-week charitable clinics to long-term self-sustaining vision centers, OneSight delivers quality eye exams and glasses to underserved populations globally. In 33 years, OneSight has served 7 million people in 50+ countries and has provided permanent vision care access to more than 46 million people. Visit www.onesight.org.

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