



## WHY EYEGLASSES?

2.5 billion people could see clearly to earn, learn and be safe, if they could acquire a pair of simple eyeglasses. Of these individuals, 624 million are visually impaired without this 700-year-old technology, and 70% just need a pair of over-the-counter reading glasses. These are the type of non-prescription glasses that those of us with blurry near vision in the US and Europe can purchase at a pharmacy or a book shop, and that VisionSpring can source for as little as \$1.

The return on investment in a pair of eyeglasses is high. Our recent 2018 Randomized Control Trial conducted on a tea estate in Assam India, found that with reading glasses productivity increased by 22% on average and up to 32% among workers over the age of 50. This [landmark study](#) published in The Lancet Global Health in July is consistent with our original 2009 quasi-experimental study conducted by the University of Michigan which revealed a productivity increase of 35%. Further analysis of the data conducted by VisionSpring found that this increase in productivity has the potential to increase income by an estimated 20%. For people earning less than \$4 per day, this can translate into increased earnings of roughly \$216 dollars over the two-year lifespan of a pair of VisionSpring eyeglasses. Using high-volume, low-margin business models, VisionSpring generates \$23 of socioeconomic impact for every \$1 invested.

Despite the opportunity to unleash incredible social and economic gains, the market has failed to meet the needs of consumers earning less than \$5 per day. The cost of blurry vision is not just borne by individuals. Uncorrected refractive error is costing the global economy an estimated \$202 billion with low-income countries disproportionately affected.

## OUR MISSION, MARKETS, AND MODELS

Founded in 2001 by U.S. optometrist Dr. Jordan Kassalow, VisionSpring is a pioneering, global social enterprise creating access to affordable eyewear, everywhere. We expand the optical market, using innovative distribution strategies to sell radically affordable, durable, attractive eyeglasses to consumers earning less than \$5 per day. In 2018, 53% of our customers acquired their first-ever pair of eyeglasses.

To date, we have facilitated vision screenings for almost seven million people of all ages and have distributed over 5.5 million pairs of vision correcting eyeglasses, comprised of readymade readers and prescription eyeglasses. We reach our customers using innovative B2B business models, and advance social impact along three themes: *See to Earn, See to Learn, and See to be Safe.*

## Our business models are as follows:

### Wholesale Partnerships

We sell bulk quantities of eyeglasses coupled with training and marketing to a network of hospitals, rural pharmacies in Bangladesh, eye care centres, NGOs and government partners. As of 2018, 385 organizations count on VisionSpring's quality product, timely delivery, favourable payment terms, and sell through support to expand their vision services to low-income customers.

- India: We reach our customer-base throughout the country with a nexus of partners in the most impoverished states: Bihar, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan.
- Worldwide: Our global wholesale unit works in 30 countries any given year. In six key countries, we have teams consisting of sales representatives and optical technical advisors – Bangladesh, Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda, and Zambia.

### Vision Access Solutions

We bring eyeglasses to workplaces, schools and rural communities pairing philanthropic funds with the purchasing power of end-consumers and governments.

### SEE TO EARN



To boost the earning potential and quality of life of working age adults engaged in the informal sector in slums, industrial zones and rural areas, we partner with private foundations, government and corporate social responsibility offices of major businesses to bring free vision screening and low-cost glasses to communities. We serve clusters of women micro-entrepreneurs, weavers, factory workers, farmers, and their

family members significantly in India, and newly in Nigeria and Kenya.

- Reading Glasses for Improved Livelihoods: In Bangladesh 25k BRAC community health workers are conducting presbyopia screenings and have sold 1.4 million pairs of reading glasses in 61 of 64 districts in Bangladesh. We began replicating the model in Uganda (2017) and Kenya (2018).

- Clear Vision Workplaces: We work with an alliance of leading brands to dramatically increase eyeglasses coverage rates among low-income workers who produce textiles, garments, home goods, tea, and coffee. Our Clear Vision Workplaces projects introduce worker well-being initiatives to these globally recognized corporations.

## SEE TO LEARN



Collaborating in India with NPCBVI, nationally and locally, and with education-focused NGOs, we conduct school-based vision screenings, provide eyeglasses for students and their teachers, and train stakeholders to identify children suspected of having a vision problem. Globally we provide high-quality children's frames for early stage youth initiatives. Annually over 120,000 low-income children across emerging and frontier markets gain

the opportunity to succeed in school through our S2L program.

## SEE TO BE SAFE



To reduce the risk of traffic accidents and associated mortality and injury, we screen the vision of truckers, bus drivers and allied transport workers, such as mechanics and cargo loaders. Invested in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 3.6 on road safety, corporate sponsors and Ministry of Transportation partners facilitate vision camps and low-cost glasses in major transit hubs.