

Voiceover: It looks like a normal day at Byumba District hospital in northern Rwanda. But 34 people arriving here today are hoping that this weekend, they will have their sight restored. A team of eye specialists from CBM's partner hospital is arriving to provide sight-saving cataract surgery....
Xaverine has been blind for over 4 years due to cataracts.

Xaverine: "It was a gradual and painless loss of vision, it started with me not being able to recognise the faces around me. I now can't walk around by myself. I live alone at home. I don't have anyone to support me, but I do sometimes get visitors to help but they come and go."

Voiceover: Xaverine has been living needlessly blind because she couldn't make the long journey to a specialist eye hospital. But now, thanks to funding by the UK public and Government through the UK Aid Match scheme, the specialist team come here to this rural district.

Dr Marcel: "We have had this privilege to work with Kabgayi hospital, which is supported by CBM. Today we are having the 3rd outreach of the team from Kabgayi eye hospital. If you cannot see, you cannot work, it means you depend on some other people. When you get back your sight through this cataract surgeries and you can see, it means then you can work, for your home, for your family, even for your country."

Voiceover: CBM's See the Way project has been helping people in rural Rwanda access sight-saving treatments by training and equipping eye health workers at District hospitals and funding outreach activities like this.

Dr Theophile: "We have this partnership between CBM and Kabgayi Eye Unit, where we are supporting some district hospitals, so far we are supporting four different hospitals, located in different provinces in Rwanda. We are strengthening their capacity, strengthening their eye units which are there, but also helping them to offer, to deliver the eye services to people living in that catchment area. So for those hospitals which they don't have ophthalmologists Kabgayi team goes there to do eye surgeries, so that those people in that catchment area don't have to travel from their home to Kabgayi, so it's a way of bringing the services to the nearest place as much as we can. So today we managed to operate on 34 patients."

Xaverine: "I'm happy to receive the treatment today. I believe I will be ok and afterwards I can walk around and maybe do something to profit my family."

Marcel: "I cannot find enough words to thank you, thank the people from UK, who contribute for our population, so that our people may get back their eyes, their sight, to go back to their work, to work for their families, so thank you so much for everyone who contributed to this programme."