



# Reading Glasses for Improved Livelihoods



VisionSpring's *Reading Glasses for Improved Livelihoods* (RGIL) program was founded in 2006 on the premise that de-medicalizing access to eyeglasses is a core piece in the puzzle of solving uncorrected blurry vision for 1 billion people worldwide. By bringing vision correction services to people where they earn, learn, and live, we are unlocking income-earning potential for those most vulnerable to poverty.

## HERE'S HOW WE DO IT



**Train and supply** Community Agents with quality eyeglasses



**Conduct** vision screenings in communities, identify presbyopia, and sell reading glasses



**Refer** customers with other eye conditions to higher level care

“As an optometrist, I witnessed first-hand how the existing optical market was failing to provide people in remote and low-wealth areas with the simple eyeglasses they needed. That observation—combined with the belief that community-based care is effective and meaningful—inspired RGIL's disruptive model.”



DR. JORDAN KASSALOW  
Doctor of Optometry  
VisionSpring Founder

## WHERE WE WORK



RGIL is implemented nationally in Bangladesh and is rapidly growing in Malawi, Uganda, and Zambia. Additionally, in 2022 the World Health Organization incorporated RGIL's community-based methodology in the Training in Assistive Products to encourage governments and others to expand access to vision screening and reading glasses.

## IMPACT

Through December 2024



**13.2M**  
people screened



**2.8M**  
eyeglasses dispensed



**60%**  
are receiving  
their first-ever  
pair of glasses



**69%**  
earn less than  
\$2.50 per day



**63%**  
women served  
by the program



**42k**  
Community  
Agents trained

**\$598M**

in income potential unlocked  
per pair of eyeglasses

## KEYS TO SUCCESS

### 1 RADICALLY AFFORDABLE

The average RGIL customer lives on less than USD 2.50 per day. Purchasing a new pair of eyeglasses can be a daunting expense. Therefore, we identified a price point that is accessible for our customers and includes a sales commission for Community Agents. This offers customers the immediate benefit of clear vision for the cost of just 1-2 days' wages.

### 2 DIGNITY OF CHOICE

We all care about what we wear on our face, which is why RGIL prioritizes the style and durability of our products. Through research and focus groups, RGIL identifies the best selection of frames for each market and uses high-quality materials that last.

### 3 HIGHLY EFFECTIVE

Eyeglasses are one of the most low-cost, high-impact health interventions to boost economic and social outcomes for people vulnerable to poverty. In fact, a simple pair of eyeglasses can increase a worker's productivity by up to 32 percent.

## ADD VISION CORRECTION TO YOUR SERVICES

With the support of organizations like yours, we can ensure a world of clear vision for all people, everywhere. Learn how you can integrate RGIL's vision correction program into your services and email us at: [RGIL@visionspring.org](mailto:RGIL@visionspring.org)

## SUCCESS PARTNERS



*“It is a simple, high-impact, low-cost, and scalable intervention that hastens human development. I am happy that BRAC played a pioneering role in this important work.”*



MUSHTAQUE  
CHOUDHARY  
Former Vice Chair,  
BRAC

## ABOUT VISIONSPRING

Founded in 2001, VisionSpring is the social enterprise accelerating the use of eyeglasses in emerging and frontier markets. Our mission is to increase lifelong earning, learning, safety, and well-being through eyeglasses for people vulnerable to poverty. As of 2024, VisionSpring corrected the vision of more than 14 million people living on less than \$4 per-day, unlocking more than \$3 billion in income earning potential.

[VISIONSPRING.ORG](https://VISIONSPRING.ORG)  
[RGIL@visionspring.org](mailto:RGIL@visionspring.org)

*“My community is happy with the RGIL program because the glasses are very affordable and accessible compared to the optical shops.”*

BRIDGET ZIMBA, 56

USA: VisionSpring is a tax-exempt charity under the IRS code section 501c3, tax ID# 31-1811558

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