

Sightsavers Christmas FM Campaign Report

Objective 1: Raising enough money to provide 5,555 cataract operations through the Christmas FM 2017 campaign

With the support of the incredible listeners of Christmas FM in 2017, Sightsavers was able to provide 6,822 sight restoring cataract operations from the €218,316 raised over the course of the month long campaign. A significant increase from the initial target set at the start of the campaign.

People in some of the poorest countries in the world where we work like Mozambique, Bangladesh, Liberia, Cameroon, Sierra Leone, Malawi, India, Mali, Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia all benefitted from this amazing support.

The first known cataract operation that was supported by Christmas Fm listeners took place in January 2018, just three weeks after Christmas FM came off air.

It was for a beautiful lady called Mariamo Abucar who lived in a rural village in Nampula Province in Mozambique. Mariamo had cataracts in both of her eyes. Before she became blind Mariamo loved walking, visiting her friends, and going to pray. But since losing her sight, Mariamo depended on her husband to help and guide her everywhere – even around her own home.

Thanks to the support of Christmas FM listeners, Mariamo received a sight-restoring operation on the 25th January 2018 – a day she will never forget. She couldn't stop smiling on her journey from the hospital and, when she arrived home, Mariamo confidently led the way, walking ahead of her husband!

Just one day after surgery, and just one month after the Christmas FM campaign wrapped up, Mariamo has regained her independence.

“I washed my face and when I opened (my eyes), I realized that I could see. The first thing I said to my husband was that I was losing you my husband. I can see you now, it was a long time without seeing your face.”



Mariamo with her husband and her grandson after her sight restoring operation in January 2018

In September 2018, just nine months after the Christmas Fm 2017 campaign Ciara Smullen, from the Sightsavers Ireland team travelled to Mozambique. There she met with many people who were needlessly blind from cataract. One such story that struck a chord with the group was a lady called Luisa Marcoma who lived on her own in a small rural community.

Luisa told the Sightsavers team that each afternoon she would make herself a small dinner and go to bed at 4.30pm and wait till the sun came up the following day before she emerged from her house. This was part of Luisa's daily routine because once darkness fell, her rapidly deteriorating sight meant she could not see anything and as a result lived in fear. Two days later, following her sight restoring operation Luisa proudly showed us around her home and her vegetable patch, completely unaided. Luisa's future looks very different now that she had regained her independence after her operation. Another life transformed thanks to the listeners of Christmas FM 2017.



Luisa Marcoma with Ciara Smullen and Alison Bough from the Sightsavers Ireland team after her sight restoring operation in September 2018

Objective 2: Creating Awareness through Christmas FM

The second objective for the Christmas 2017 campaign was to raise awareness of Sightsavers as an organization that is trying to eliminate avoidable blindness across some of the poorest countries in the world.

Like many other charities in the sector, Sightsavers commission research from the Irish Charity Engagement Monitor to monitor and track public perception of charities and perceptions around Sightsavers in particular. From this research there are two specific indicators that we use in order to measure the change in awareness levels.

Spontaneous Awareness is an indicator which is used to measure how quickly Sightsavers is named unprompted, when a participant is asked to name the charities they are familiar with. Traditionally Sightsavers has always sat at 1%-2% and was at 2% in the wave of research undertaken the months immediately prior to the Christmas FM 2017 campaign.

In April 2018 and again in November 2018 our spontaneous awareness doubled to 4% which was unprecedented. The important point to note on this increase was that it didn't decrease over the course of the year but held firm at 4%. The question asked of participants can be found on appendix 1.

To analyse the awareness levels further, participants were also prompted and asked if they had heard of Sightsavers. Whilst other international organizations experienced a decline in prompted awareness, Sightsavers' prompted awareness levels, similar to the spontaneous awareness levels have also seen steady growth from 58% in November 2017 to 63% in November 2018's round of research.

Due to the scale of the partnership with Christmas FM 2017, it was considered best practice to add a metric to this year's research questions so we could measure the overall success of the campaign in terms of recognition.

This specific question added to the survey simply asked the question of respondents if they had heard of the Christmas FM and Sightsavers partnership in 2017. The results were very satisfying in that **51%** had heard of the partnership with Christmas FM.

In summary, we have evidence based research to indicate that the Christmas FM 2017 partnership with Sightsavers increased the awareness levels across the country.

To conclude, the support from the team in Christmas FM and their amazing listeners, enabled Sightsavers to provide over 6,800 sight restoring operations. This has made a truly incredible impact on so many lives. The campaign also provided Sightsavers with an unprecedented platform to tell the personal stories of people who had their sight restored. By increasing our awareness nationwide we can continue to tell an even wider audience how vital their support is in changing lives by giving the gift of sight.

Thank you to all involved for making this happen.

Appendix 1.

Source: Irish Charity Engagement Monitor, Nov 18, nfpSynergy | Base: 1,000 adults 16+, Ireland

Questions asked to a sample base of 1,000 adults in November 2018 that referred directly to awareness levels of Sightsavers and the Christmas Fm 2017 campaign.

1. Unprompted Awareness

“There are many different charities, voluntary organisations and pressure groups today, concerned with many different issues. Please can you name the first charity or voluntary organisation that comes to mind?” / “And which other charities, voluntary organisations and pressure groups can you think of?”

2. Prompted Awareness

“Which of these charitable organisations and groups have you heard of ?”

3. Campaign Awareness

“Listed below are the names of a number of campaigns, services, activities or initiatives by charities: some are done through advertising; some are on TV or in the newspapers. Please indicate whether you have heard of each of the following.”