



# Seeing Hearts Foundation

*Empowering Visually Impaired Persons (VIPs),  
one inclusive step at a time.*



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# Founder's Remark

**M**y journey to helping Visually Impaired Persons (VIP) started in 2022. It was as a result of an encounter with a young man who was living life at the intersection of indigence and visual impairment. What I had intended to be a one-off financial gift quickly morphed into a holistic intervention, when I realised that more was needed to pull the young man back from the brink of financial and social exclusion. This encounter ultimately birthed the vision which has since been formalised as the Seeing Hearts Foundation. Since then, we have onboarded more VIPs into our different intervention programmes, to help them access education, healthcare, entrepreneurship and mindset transformation. I am learning that life is more meaningful, fulfilling and can be lived abundantly when you allow your candle to light that of another person. Over 4.5 million visually-impaired persons across the 36 states and the FCT of Nigeria suffer exclusion from quality eyecare and general healthcare, education as well gainful employment in the workforce, leaving these indigent people with no opportunities, leading to loneliness, poverty and severe hunger. We cannot continue to fold our arms and act like we don't care. At Seeing Hearts Foundation, we are committed to bridging these gaps through our various intervention programmes which are targeted towards ensuring that VIPs are socially, digitally and financially included. I therefore invite individuals, friends and families, private sector organizations, government parastatals and international development organizations to join us in this impact-oriented voyage to help visually impaired persons. Your actions and attitudes towards them are the lens through which they see the world- let's work together to make their lives meaningful. Thank you in anticipation.

**Ms. Tope Songonuga,**

*Founder and Chief Executive, Seeing Hearts Foundation*



# About Seeing Hearts Foundation

**S**eeing Hearts Foundation (SHF) is a registered charity organization that is empowering visually impaired people across Nigeria, one inclusive step at a time. The Foundation exists to empower people who suffer from different kinds of visual impairments to thrive financially, socially, and digitally. Over 4.5 million visually impaired persons across the 36 states and the FCT of Nigeria suffer exclusion from quality eyecare and general healthcare, education as well gainful employment in the workforce, leaving these indigent people with no opportunities, leading to loneliness, poverty and severe hunger. Our Goal at Seeing Hearts Foundation is to help people see through their hearts to understand the everyday challenges that indigent visually impaired people and to partner with individuals, corporations, governments, and national and international development organizations to mobilize resources to help them live healthy, included and happy lives.



## Seeing

- We identify with the challenges of Visually Impaired Persons (VIPs)
- We are the lens through which VIPs see things positively in a world that has excluded them.
- We see and help them discover their gifts, talents and unharnessed potential to thrive.



## Hearts

- We empathize with, not pity VIPs.
- We show VIPs genuine love and care and give them a sense of belonging.
- We give them another lifeline when hope is lost.



## Foundation

- We empower them with education, economic and entrepreneurial skills for self-sustenance.
- We provide tools, and visual and mobility aiding technologies to engage with the outer world.
- We provide quality healthcare support and nutritious food to lead healthy, happy lives.

# HOW WE STARTED

The Seeing Hearts Foundation vision started informally in mid-February of 2022. This was a vision which Tope Songonuga, the Chief Executive of the Foundation, accidentally stumbled into through the informal philanthropic efforts of her mother. What began as an accident has since become an intentional vision to improve the lives of as many indigent visually impaired individuals as possible, become financially, socially and digitally relevant in society.



# OUR VISION

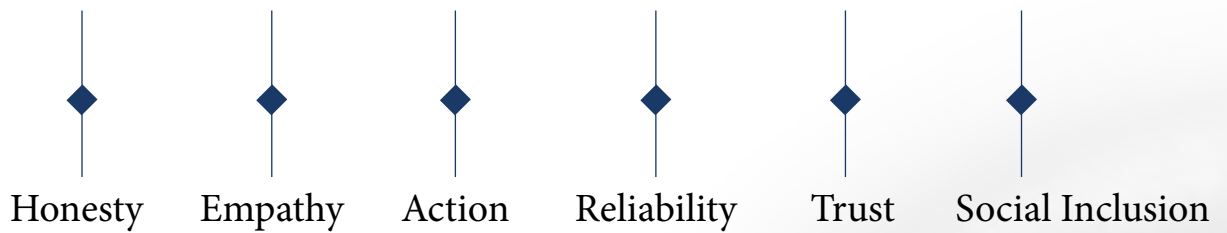
A world where visually impaired persons are financially, socially and digitally included.

# OUR MISSION

To enhance the well-being and independence of individuals with visual impairments. Through education and empowerment, practical and sustainable support mechanisms, awareness and advocacy programs, we strive to create an inclusive society where every person, regardless of visual ability, can thrive, achieve their full potential and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

# OUR CORE VALUES

# HEARTS







# OUR WORK AND THE SDGSS

Our work at Seeing Hearts Foundation is enshrined and in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, (SDGs). Through our holistic and comprehensive support to visually impaired persons, our work aligns with seven (7) of the Sustainable Development Goals.



Providing Education for Visually Impaired People at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education.



Ensuring No Visually Impaired Student Goes Hungry or Suffers from Malnutrition



Contributing To Healthy Vision and Overall Wellbeing of Visually Impaired People



Alleviating Poverty Among Visually Impaired People Through Economic and Entrepreneurship Empowerment and Skills Acquisition



Advocating For Policy Reforms to Embrace Inclusion, Diversity and Equality in Work and Gainful Employment of Visually Impaired People



Working with individuals, the government, institutions and associations to ensure visually impaired are empowered to thrive in an excluded world.

# HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT US

## DONATE

Donate via Bank Transfer

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*Seeing Hearts Foundation*

**United Bank for Africa**



*Scan to donate Pounds*



*Scan to donate Naira and other currencies*

## PARTNER

We are open to partner with government and private businesses including individuals to achieve our vision. To partner with us, please send us an email on [admin@seeingheartsfoundation](mailto:admin@seeingheartsfoundation)

## VOLUNTEER

We are actively recruiting professionals in different fields who want to use their experience and expertise to improve our work by devoting a few hours to support us.

To sign up, please visit:

[bit.ly/SHFVolunteer](http://bit.ly/SHFVolunteer)

## SPONSOR A VI

850K per annum (covers monthly stipends, accommodation, purchase of laptop, feeding medicals, tuition)

## PAY FOR AN EYE-CARE INTERVENTION

Kindly email us at

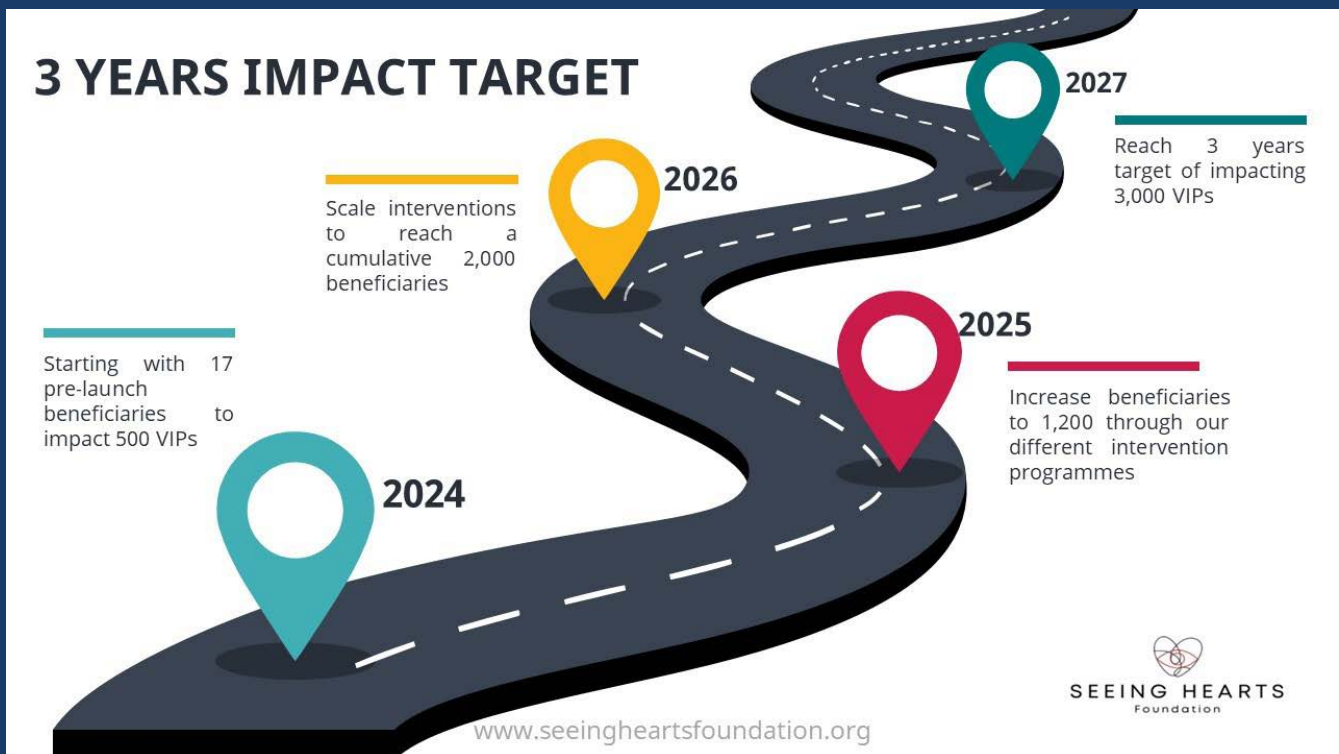
[admin@seeingheartsfoundation.org](mailto:admin@seeingheartsfoundation.org)

for details.

## INTERN

Are you an undergraduate or a young graduate and looking for places to gain experience and learn on-the-job? SHF has a comprehensive

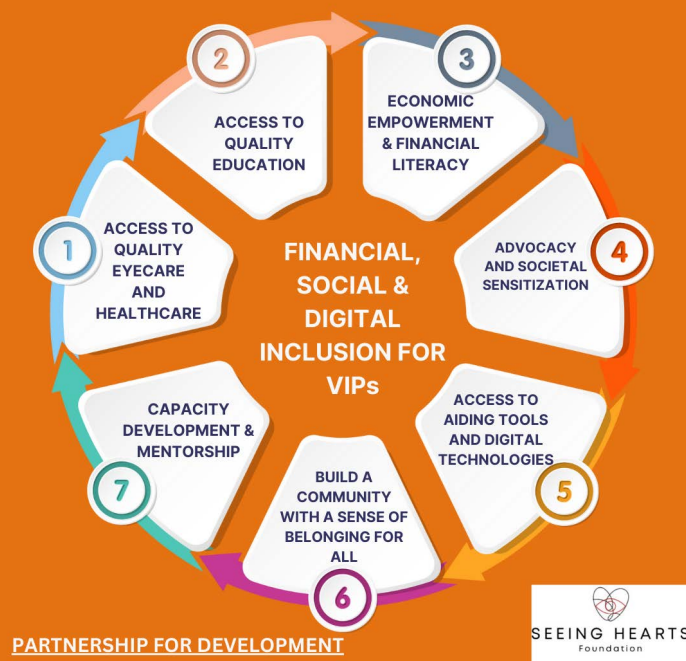
# OUR 3-YEAR OBJECTIVE



As a new organization, we have set an ambitious goal to empower 3,000 visually impaired persons by December 2027, through our different intervention programmes and initiatives targeted at VIPs across Nigeria. These include but are not limited to education, scholarship, financial aid, entrepreneurship training, mentorship and capacity development as well as eye care amongst others.

# OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

At Seeing Hearts Foundation, we do not claim to have an exhaustive list of solutions to the challenges that indigent visually impaired persons face. However, our approach to solving the problems that we focus on as an organization is well-researched and data-driven. Our Theory of Change is to use education, economic empowerment and financial literacy; advocacy and societal sensitization; provision of aiding tools, digital technologies and digital literacy; establishment of a community that promotes equality and makes everywhere feel loved and belong; and capacity development and mentorship. Another essential part of our theory of change is partnership for development. We understand that we do not have all the solutions and resources at our disposal. Therefore, we are open to partnership with individuals, institutions, agencies, government bodies, private sector organizations or International Development Organizations to collectively advance our vision where visually impaired persons are included.



# EDUCATION

We believe that indigent visually impaired persons are mostly excluded from access to quality education in Nigeria. This exclusion is connected to poor teaching and learning infrastructure for VIPs, lack of qualified teachers for VIPs, and poverty. Our work at Seeing Hearts prioritizes providing quality education for visually impaired persons at all levels, including primary, secondary and tertiary as well as vocational forms of education.



# ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND FINANCIAL LITERACY

Poverty and lack are part of the leading challenges of visually impaired people in Nigeria. Because of their lack of education, poor acceptance and employment in workplaces, as well as the dearth of VIPs with skills to earn a meaningful income, many of them are left to live in abject poverty and unable to meet their basic needs, leading to hunger and malnutrition. Through our work at Seeing Hearts Foundation, we promote gainful empowerment and employment of visually impaired persons. We empower them with entrepreneurship skills and financial literacy education, in addition to the provision of business capital, all geared towards helping them to become financially independent.



# ADVOCACY AND SOCIETAL SENSITIZATION

We seek to amplify and be the voices and cries of visually impaired persons through our advocacy programmes, conferences, and seminars to sensitize members of the public. Existing and propagated negative stereotypes of persons with visual impairment are erroneous and misrepresentations of persons with visual impairment. We will continue to advocate for the right policies and practices that are in alignment with the frameworks for equality, diversity and inclusion in Nigerian society including in workplaces, schools, governance, architecture etc.





## AIDING TECHNOLOGIES AND DIGITAL LITERACY

The world has become a global village and is witnessing advanced forms of digital transformation. Visually impaired persons cannot and should not be left out. Seeing Hearts Foundation remain committed to empowering indigent visually impaired people with pragmatic skills, tools, and technology as well as knowledge through digital education to be digitally included in this 21st century. We are empowering VIPs to be able to connect, interact and transact with anyone, anywhere in the world through digital and internet technologies.

## A COMMUNITY WHERE EVERYONE IS LOVED AND HAS A SENSE OF BELONGING

Visually impaired people are often abandoned by friends and families and are left to be alone. They are often discriminated against because of their visual impairment. We want to build a community where visually impaired people can have a sense of belonging and feel loved and accepted. Our community initiatives are designed to achieve this.

# CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND MENTORSHIP

Through our capacity development and mentorship initiatives, we offer a platform for VIPs to receive professional, business, career, and life training in partnership with individuals and organizations with expertise in areas of their need. We develop their capacities in key areas that will enhance their self-reliance. We provide customized and personalized counselling and psychosocial support for VIPs, helping them navigate through their pains to discover, develop and deliver their God-given potential.



# QUALITY HEALTHCARE AND EYECARE

The major causes of blindness in Nigeria are Cataract, Glaucoma, Trachoma, cornea opacity, and uncorrected refractive errors. Most of the blindness resulting from these causes can be prevented if detected early. Our healthcare pillar ensures that we mobilize resources to help as many persons as possible to regain their sight through partnerships with healthcare providers and opticians.



# OUR TEAM

**Funmi Adetola-Francis**

Director of Finance and Operations



**Boluwaseto Adenuga**

Chief Data Officer



**Tope Songonuga**

Founder and Chief Executive



# TESTIMONIALS

## MY DISABILITY CAN BE VERY PRODUCTIVE

**I**, Oluwadamilola Monsurudeen Shodeyi (Mr Computer) would like to appreciate Ms. Tope Songonuga and the Seeing Hearts Foundation for transforming my life and helping me to actualize my dream. In June 2022, I got to know about the Foundation, and I was interviewed by the Board of, where I shared my challenges starting from the College of Education to the early stage of my master's program. The organization saw beyond my challenges and decided to take up the sponsorship of my master's Programme. I must be sincere; Seeing Heart Foundation is a 'talk-and-do' Foundation; they keep up and go beyond what they promised me to do. The Foundation is paying my tuition fees, sponsoring me at conferences, giving me a monthly feeding allowance, providing for my academic needs, paying my house rent and many more. In conclusion: Seeing Heart Foundation is proving to the world that disability is productive.

## I WOULD HAVE BEEN A DROPOUT, BUT THANKS TO THE SEEING HEARTS FOUNDATION, I WILL BE GRADUATING SOON

**I**, ADESOKAN AFEEZ ADEWALE, am a visually impaired and 400-level student at the University of Jos in the Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation Science. I hail from Oyo State, South-West, Nigeria. I came across Seeing Hearts Foundation on the 21st of December 2023 through my friend, when I was emotionally downcast because of the serious financial challenges I was facing. I was unable to pay my school fees as a final-year student, and feeding myself was a problem. To my greatest surprise, the Foundation came to my rescue by paying my tuition fees and placing me on a monthly allowance, then promised to meet all my educational needs. But now I am free of financial difficulties, and I will be graduating soon. I can never forget what the foundation has done for me because I would have been a dropout student by now and would have regretted it for the rest of my life. May Almighty God in His mercy meet the needs of this Foundation.



## I AND MY TWO VISUALLY IMPAIRED CHILDREN HAVE ALSO BEEN PLACED ON FULL SPONSORSHIP BY SHF.

**I**, OPEOLA OLUWASEGUN ROTIMI, am a visually impaired student at the University of Jos in the Department of Special Education at 400 level. I am an indigene of Ibadan in Oyo state. I was introduced to Seeing Hearts Foundation on the 5th of November 2023 at a time when I was confronted with a lot of financial difficulties. I was hopeless and confused about my school fees, but SHF came to my rescue and placed me on a monthly allowance. Since I encountered the Foundation, all my financial problems have been solved. What gave me joy the most was about my two children who are also visually impaired and have now been placed on full sponsorship by the Foundation. My children also receive a monthly stipend from the Foundation. My prayer to the Foundation is that God will continue upholding it and you will never lack any good thing and there won't be any form of sorrow in your life, **YOU SHALL NOT BE CAGED.**



## AFTER SPONSORING MY NCE PROGRAMME, THEY STILL GAVE ME HUGE AMOUNT OF MONEY TO START A BUSINESS

I want to sincerely appreciate Seeing Hearts Foundation which has been providing for all my academic needs since April 2nd, 2022, till date. The Foundation paid my school fees in my second and third years; funded my school project and final year seminar work; bought a laptop for me and donated a monthly stipend for my upkeep. As a result of the economic hardship, the Foundation even increased the monthly allowance by over 70%. They take care of all my financial needs in school which makes my academic life easier and smoother. That's not all; the Foundation paid my house rent, including all the materials and all kitchen equipment. It was too true to be real. After all this financial support during my NCE programme, they still gave me a huge amount of money to start a business. and they also promised to keep on paying my monthly maintenance and support me through my degree program. I can't account for all the money that they have spent on me, but the reality is that it is a huge amount of money. I must sincerely thank and appreciate them for all the financial support since the day they started sponsoring me. Moshood Raheem Gbolahan



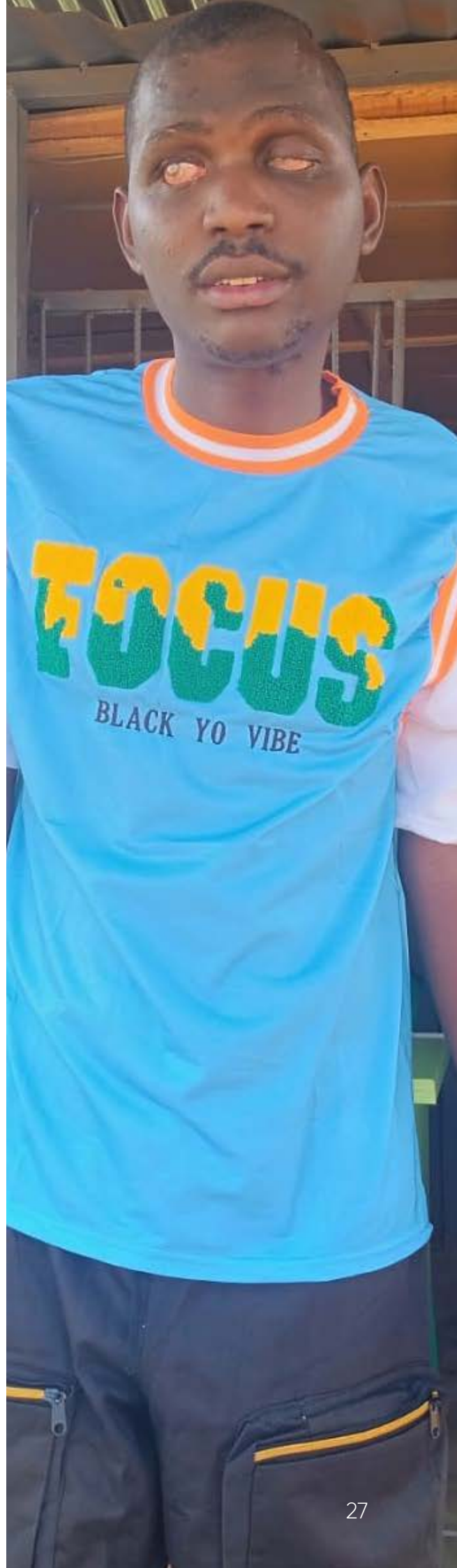
## THINGS CHANGED RAPIDLY AFTER I MET THE FOUNDATION; I WAS ABLE TO SET UP MY CLOTHING BUSINESS BRAND

I am a visually impaired who hails from Ayetoro in Ogun state. I am a graduate of Special Education/ Social Studies at Federal College of Education Oyo Special in Oyo state. I came across SEEING HEART FOUNDATION on 1st October 2022 Before I met the Foundation, things were quite challenging for me, especially in my finances and my ability to meet my basic needs. Things changed rapidly after I met the Foundation; I was placed on a monthly payroll, getting my basic needs wasn't difficult anymore and I was able to meet up with my catering ambition after I got financed by the foundation. Most importantly, I was able to set up my clothing business brand called PRETTY DEMMY'S COLLECTIONS which involves selling clothes of different designs and styles, etc. Words alone can't quantify how much I have been so grateful to the Foundation. My prayer is that God would keep being the bedrock of the Foundation and strengthen them financially beyond their wildest dream. Shalom!!! OGUNSHINA DEBORAH OLUWATOSIN



## SHF HAS BEEN SUPPORTING MY ACADEMICS, AND UPKEEP AS WELL AS MY MUSIC CAREER; MY DISABILITY IS NOT AN INABILITY

I am using this opportunity to thank Almighty God and the Seeing Hearts Foundation. I am so grateful that the Foundation has been supporting me since February of 2022 in my academics, upkeep as well as Music career. SHF made me forget the sufferings of this world and encouraged me that disability is not inability. The Foundation made me believe I can do great things and become an individual that will be useful for myself and society. Thanks to Mrs. Adetola for the great connection that changed my entire life for good. Olotu Enitan Taofeek



# DONATE

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## CONNECT WITH US ONLINE



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