



12 February 2010



Aloisia and her grandma Lina Yakrongme, who was completely blind

Dear Supporter,

My name is Lindsay Dewhurst and I have been working for The Fred Hollows Foundation NZ in West New Britain, Papua New Guinea for the last four years.

As a supporter of our work, I know you will enjoy sharing a special conversation I had recently with Aloisia Kaipane. It is such a wonderful example of how your donations are making a very real difference to people on this poor and very remote island.

Aloisia is a community health worker who has always wanted to help people so she jumped at the chance to train in eye care with The Fred Hollows Foundation NZ. She had seen at first hand how many people in West New Britain cannot see and who need help from their family to do everyday tasks. She had also witnessed the life-changing impact of a 20 minute cataract surgery and told me how proud she was to be part of the team who makes this happen.

Aloisia's most important job is to visit remote rural villages in advance of a surgical outreach visit to identify people who need cataract surgery. She could hardly believe it when she heard that a Hollows NZ surgical visit was planned for the village where her grandmother, Lina Yakrongme, lives. Apungi is a very remote village on the south coast of the island, inaccessible by road and only accessible by boat four months of the year because the seas are so rough.



The Fred Hollows Foundation NZ

YES I would like to restore sight:

\$100 \$75 \$50 \$25 Other \$

Whatever amount you choose to give, your gift is truly appreciated.

My cheque/money order payable to The Fred Hollows Foundation NZ is enclosed.

OR, please debit my (tick as appropriate):

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Card number

Name on card Expiry /

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Telephone

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Please send me (please tick)

- details on making a gift to The Foundation in my will.
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Aloisia said "I could not wait to see my Bubu (Grandma) who I had not seen for three years but when I got there she could not tell who I was. Her eyes had started to go cloudy five years ago and now she could see nothing at all. When I reached out to her she said "Who are you? Why are you here?" I told her "I am Aloisia, your granddaughter, and I have come here to help you see again." She started to cry then and so did I because I love her so much and it hurt me that she could not do anything for herself. She just sat in front of her hut all day wishing she could see to fetch her water and cook for herself. She told me that people went into her hut to take her food and firewood and she could do nothing to stop them.

Two days later, I sailed with my grandmother to Kandrian for the outreach clinic. She looked so small and sad and was frightened about what was going to happen to her. I was nervous too as I helped her into the operating theatre and stayed with her through the whole eye operation. When it was finished, I helped her outside and found a good spot under a tree for her to rest.

The next day I could hardly breathe as I waited to take off my Grandma's bandages.

As I gently bathed her eye, tears just poured down her cheeks because she could see me again. She could not believe how much I had changed and she was laughing and smiling even while she was crying. Now my Grandma is back at home, she has a new life, she can look after herself again and helps to look after the children."

When Lina regained her sight, her family got their mother and grandmother back. But there are still thousands of people like Lina across the Pacific waiting for surgery. We need your help to reach them. Just \$25 can help to fund a cataract surgery but please give what you can to help us give the gift of sight to many more people this year.

Kind regards

Lindsay R Dewhurst

**Lindsay Dewhurst
The Fred Hollows Foundation NZ**



Lina after her sight restoring surgery

QUICK FACTS: PAPUA NEW GUINEA

- PNG has a population of nearly 7m people, half of whom live on less than \$2 per day
- PNG has only 9 eye doctors for the whole population, just over one eye doctor for every million people
- The health spend per head in PNG is \$29 compared to \$2421 in New Zealand¹
- At least 60,000 people in PNG are blind and 800 more lose their sight every month.
- The Fred Hollows Foundation NZ will open the first dedicated eye clinic in West New Britain in April 2010

¹ Source: WHO Statistics 2009

