

Mr. R.D. Thulasiraj - Aravind Eye Hospitals, Dr. H.K. Tiwari - R P Centre, Dr. Bachani - Ministry of Health, and Dr. M. Upadhyay - WHO.

Planned activities of the VISION2020 India Forum:

1. Advocacy

- VISION2020 state launches with clear commitments including an action plan and budget

- Encouraging active Government/ NGO involvement in World Sight Day celebrations at the state/central level

2. Mapping

- Facilitating information sharing among the INGO community
- Initiating comprehensive national mapping

3. Development of a framework for monitoring
4. Alignment of eye care programs to VISION2020 objectives
5. Developing new programme initiatives
6. Creating a framework for resource management.

The following organisations are founder-members of the Forum

1. CBM International
2. Sight Savers International
3. Orbis International
4. Fred Hollows Foundation
5. Operation Eyesight Universal
6. Seva Foundation
7. Lions Cub International (LCIF)
8. International Centre for Eyecare Education (ICEE)
9. Aravind Eye Care System
10. L.V. Prasad Eye Institute

The following organisations are also being requested to become founder members:

1. Dr. R. P. Centre, Delhi
2. Helpage India, Delhi
3. International Eye Foundation, USA.

The Forum is in the process of being registered as a Society in Madurai, Tamil Nadu, where the office will be located initially.

Tools to plan for more effective eye care programmes

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Blindness is a global public health problem with approximately 45 million people blind and another 135 million people visually impaired, worldwide. The large number of patients requiring care suggests that a well run eye care programme can

generate enough revenue to sustain itself, provided patients can be brought into the system and services are of high enough quality to attract patients. Developing a sustainable programme, however, requires a lot of planning to balance investment and yield for optimal results. Workload estimations are needed to plan for human resources and infrastructure requirements. The potential market for services needs to be estimated to determine the reach of the programme, and to plan for strategies to better tap the unmet need. Such planning will provide eye care programmes with a structured but flexible approach towards building sustainability.

We are currently developing tools for the following

1. To estimate the market potential or the unmet need for cataract and refractive services

2. A tool to guide through decision making or an investment analysis for acquiring ophthalmic equipment.
3. A tool for strategic planning for an existing eye hospital including planning for manpower requirements and cost recovery
4. A tool for establishing effective eye hospitals

We encourage readers to access and evaluate these tools and provide us with feedback to further improve them. The tools and manual can be accessed at <http://www.aravind.org/tools/index.htm>

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