VISION 2020 : A global initiative

1Dr. Abha Singh 2Dr. Arun Kumar 3Dr. Neelam Sajwan
1,2,3Consultant, Dept. of Shalakya Tantra, UAU, main campus, Harrawala, Dehradun

Abstract: An estimated 45 million people around the world are blind\(^1\). Mostly lost their sight to diseases that are treatable or preventable. Eighty percent of them live in the developing countries where chronic economic deprivation is exacerbated by the added challenge of falling vision\(^2\). In response to this global need, the World Health Organization (WHO), Geneva, Switzerland, with the International Agency for the prevention of Blindness (IAPB), a partnership of eye care organizations, launched the VISION 2020 : The Right to Sight initiative in 1999\(^3\)-\(^5\). It aims to eliminate avoidable blindness in the world by 2020.

Keywords: blind, global, deprivation, eye, sight

Introduction: Vision 2020 : The Right to Sight is a global initiative launched by the World Health Organization and a Task Force of International Non-governmental Organizations to combat the gigantic problem of blindness in the world.

It was launched in Geneva on February 8, 1999 by then Director General of the WHO, Dr. Gro Harlem Brutland. International agency for the Prevention of Blindness, funding agencies international, non-governmental and private organizations that collaborate with the WHO in the prevention and control of blindness\(^6\).

Vision 2020 is a partnership that provides guidance, technical and resources support to countries that have formally adopted it’s agenda.

Aim: The mission of the vision 2020 Global Initiative is to eliminate the main causes of avoidable blindness by the year 2020 by facilitating the planning, development and implementation of sustainable national eye-care programmes i.e a world in which no one is needlessly blind and where those with unavoidable vision loss can achieve their full potential.

Objectives:

1. The Right to sight accomplishes it’s mission as it attains the major objectives : Raise the profile in the key audiences of the causes of avoidable blindness and the solutions that will help to eliminate the problem.
2. Identify and secure the necessary resources around the world in order to provide an increased level of prevention and treatment programmes.
3. Facilitate the planning development and implementation of the three core vision 2020 strategies by National Programmes.

Core Strategies

1. Disease control : facilitate the implementation of specific programmes to control and treat the major causes of blindness.
2. Human resource development : support training of ophthalmologists and other eye care personnel to provide eye care.
3. Infrastructure and appropriate technology development : assist to improve infrastructure and technology to make eye care more available and accessible.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies for Dealing with the leading causes of Blindness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disease</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cataract</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Trachoma | • Bilamellar rotation surgery for lids scarred by entropion.  
• Antibiotic distribution with tetracycline or azithromycin.  
• Facial cleanliness  
• Environmental controls |
| Onchocerciasis | • Ivermectin distribution |
| Childhood blindness | |  
☞ Vitamin deficiency |  |
☞ Cataract |  |
☞ Retinopathy of prematurity |  |
☞ Refractive error |  |
☞ Low vision |  |
☞ Diabetic retinopathy |  |
☞ Glaucoma |  |
| | |  
*Note: The descriptions above are simplified and do not cover all possible interventions for each disease.*
Conclusion

Vision 2020 will serve as a common platform to facilitate a focused and coordinated functioning of all the partners in eliminating avoidable blindness by the year 2020. It will further develop and strengthen the primary health/eye care approach to the problem of avoidable blindness. Broad regional alliances will be sought to eventually develop a global partnership for eye health.

References: