



International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness

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MESSAGE TO THE ADVOCACY ROADMAP WORKSHOP FOR INDIA, FROM THE INTERNATIONAL AGENCY FOR THE PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS

www.VISION2020.org

2010 represents an important milestone for VISION 2020. This year – half-time – we will review progress to date, and assess the challenges that lie ahead.

There has been much progress towards the VISION 2020 objective of eliminating avoidable blindness. India has achieved notable successes, and its experience is an inspiration to many other countries around the world.

Combating cataract blindness, controlling trachoma and onchocerciasis, as well as reducing blindness attributable to vitamin A deficiency, have been major achievements, of which all those involved in the global VISION 2020 project may be justly proud.

But all too often, realisation of our common goals is hampered by lack of awareness and understanding; by weak political will and follow through; and by the sheer magnitude of the task of delivering services to the poorest, and the most marginalised.

Effective advocacy is critical to reshaping attitudes; to securing change; and to inspiring hope. That is why advocacy is now a central priority of the International Agency for the Prevention of avoidable Blindness (IAPB). And that is why IAPB is delighted that you are meeting this week to decide how to prioritise your own advocacy efforts, and to discuss how to enhance the effectiveness of your influencing strategy.

As the competition for investment resources, particularly in the health sector, becomes even more challenging, so our arguments – moral and intellectual – must become ever more compelling. We hope that your deliberations, over the next few days, will bring forward fresh thinking, and generate many new ideas.

We look forward, at IAPB, to the outcomes you agree. We are confident that this Workshop will add momentum, and guide our own efforts to strengthen our ability to convince stakeholders that now is the time for concerted action to reduce the unnecessary suffering of millions of people whose blindness is preventable or treatable.

Julian Metcalfe

Director of Advocacy, IAPB

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VISION 2020 is the joint global initiative of IAPB and the World Health Organization for the elimination of avoidable blindness

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