

VISION 2020: The Right to Sight—INDIA

Quarterly Report

July - September 2018

Greetings from VISION 2020: The Right to Sight – INDIA.

Two significant meetings with a pan global participation held in the past quarter in India laid emphasis on a way forward as we approach year 2020. Both in the IAPB Council of Members Meeting held at Hyderabad and the October Summit of Aravind Eye Care System held at Madurai, the future path for eye health was one of the main discussions on the agenda.

At the opening session at the IAPB Council Meeting, Dr Alarcos Cieza, Coordinator, Disability and Rehabilitation at the WHO, highlighted building a momentum around eye health services and their integration into Universal Health Care. She called on the IAPB membership to think of fresh ideas to keep the momentum going. Both IAPB’s CEO Peter Holland and Victoria Sheffield, IAPB Vice-President also emphasized the importance of integrating eye care into Universal Health Care. The clarion call was “Integrating eye care into Universal Health Care – this is our way forward!”

At the annual October Summit, Mr Thulasiraj’s presentation focussed on strategies we can adopt in regard to Disease Control, Human Resources, Infrastructure and Technology for Eye Care Beyond 2020.

Surely we have to take cognisance as fast growing technology is set to be a game changer in health sector, including eye health even while we are still trying to close the gap between reaching the un-reached and underserved areas overcoming the barriers of lack of awareness.

We hope at our 15th Annual Conference at Aravind Eye Hospital, Chennai on 8 & 9 June 2019, we can discuss in depth the way beyond 2020 for eye health.

We would like to congratulate the 22 IAPB nominated Eye Health Heroes, who were awarded at the recently concluded IAPB Council of Members Meeting. It is however tinged with a sad note as the award to Mr Bikash Chandra Mohanty was presented posthumously. He passed away few days before the awards were to be given. Bikash was the 1st programme manager at VISION 2020 INDIA. Our heartfelt condolences for his family.



Dr T P Das
 President, VISION 2020 INDIA



Phanindra Babu Nukella
 CEO, VISION 2020 INDIA

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UPDATES

Congratulations Eye Health Heroes

We congratulate the 22 IAPB nominated Eye Health Heroes, who were awarded at the recently concluded IAPB Council of Members Meeting at Hyderabad. We are proud that a number of Eye Health Heroes belong to our member organisations. The Eye Health Heroes initiative recognizes and celebrates frontline staff whose work in the field and engagement with the community makes a real difference in restoring sight. We applaud the Eye Health Heroes:

Dr. Ratish Chandra Paul, Susrut Eye Foundation & Research Centre; Franklin Daniel, Operation Eyesight Universal (India); Ganesh Babu, Aravind Eye Care System; Dr. Jennifer Vaid Basaiawmoit, Bansara Eye Care Centre; Dr. Kaushik Murali, Sankara Eye Care Institutions are among those felicitated.

ADVOCACY & UPDATES

Meeting at NPCB: Mr Phanindra Babu Nukella, CEO and Mr Mrinal Ray Madhaw, Program Manager, VISION 2020 INDIA met Government officials at NPCB on 20 August 2018 to discuss various programmatic issues as follows:

- **West Bengal Ban on NGOs**

An order by the government of West Bengal on 8 May 2018 banned a large number of NGOs in the State from conducting screening camps and terminates MoUs with them. The ban is adversely impacting a number our member organisations in West Bengal and is expected to witness a drop in the overall CSR in the state. At VISION 2020 INDIA, resolving this matter is on top of our agenda. We are treating this matter with utmost importance and urgency that it deserves and have taken it up at different levels at the ministry at the centre and also at the state level.

ADVOCACY & UPDATES

In a recent meeting with the newly appointed DDG (O), NPCB, Dr Sangeeta Abrol, Mr Phanindra Babu Nukella and Mr Mrinal Ray Madhaw explained the matter in detail and requested Dr Abrol to effectively resolve the issue at the earliest.

Subsequently at the 59th Board meeting of VISION 2020 INDIA held on 24 August at Delhi and was attended by DDG (O), Dr Abrol, the West Bengal matter was discussed at length. Our East Zone Representative, Dr Rajesh Saini made a detailed presentation.

Dr Abrol has assured that she will look into the issue.

In addition to the representation made to the DDG, VISION 2020 INDIA also submitted a representation to Mr Lav Agarwal, Joint Secretary, NPCB. As a follow up action, the Deputy Secretary on instructions from the Joint Secretary had sought a factual report from the West Bengal Government. At the lack of response, in a further course of action, a letter from the Joint Secretary will be sent to the Health Secretary, West Bengal.

- **Pending DBSC dues**

The matter of pending DBSC dues, especially in eye hospital in Uttar Pradesh and also other states was discussed with DDG, Dr Abrol. The DDG has assured that she will look into the matter.

In a recently held Advisory Committee meeting at NPCB, a sub committee to look into the DBCS dues was formed. Mr Phanindra Babu Nukella has been made a member of the committee.

- **Revision of NGO Guidelines**

In the light of the new GIA scheme, Mr Phanindra Babu urged NPCB for completion of revising of NGO Guidelines. Especially as the SPOs are not clear about the process and that is restricting their work in several states. Dr Abrol assured that the guidelines will be finalized soon and shared with all states/UTs.

- **HMIS Improvement**

At the 14th Annual Conference held at Guwahati, a dedicated session was held on HMIS to discuss its challenges and way forward. The session recommendations have been submitted to NPCB. In the meeting with the DDG, Mr Phanindra followed up on the submitted HMIS recommendations. Dr Abrol informed that the revamping of HMIS is in process.



Dr Taba Khanna, SPO, Arunachal Pradesh making a presentation at HMIS session at Guwahati conference.

Programme Development

Webinar – ‘Blue Ocean Thinking’

Blue Ocean Thinking is a way of injecting innovative and creativity into thinking and mindset, departing from orthodox method of doing things. Blue Ocean approach focuses on creativity and innovation where everybody wins without taking down others. A 90 minute webinar was held on 29 August, 2018 to share the principles of this way of thinking. The webinar was exclusively for our member organisations. A total of 72 people took benefit of it.

Dr Kaushik Murali, President Medical Administration, Quality & Education, Sankara Eye Foundation India was the resource person for the webinar and Cybersight, Australia facilitated the webinar through their technology.

Read the report <http://www.vision2020india.org/blue-ocean-thinking-webinar-report/>



Training Programme

In the 2nd tranche of training programme series for mid level cadre, a two day training on “**Patient Care Counselors**” was held at PBMA’s HV Desai Eye Hospital, Pune, Maharashtra on 28 & 29 September 2018. We thank PBMA’s HV Desai Eye Hospital for hosting the programme.

Around 60 delegates from 21 organizations from 8 states participated in the programme. The programme was largely attended by Counselors who play an important role in counseling the patients and was also attended by few head of the organizations administrators. This workshop was about counseling methodologies.



A two day training on “**Patient Care Counselors**” in progress at PBMA’s HV Desai Eye Hospital, Pune

To benefit our member organisations, we have planned 4 training programme for the year 2018 – 19 to strengthen the skill of the mid level cadre of hospitals. You can find the details below. For participation, can write to Mr Mrinal R Madhaw, Programme Manager, VISION 2020 INDIA. Mail id: mrinal@vision2020india.org

Training program	Objective	Who Can Attend	Date	Venue
Standard Protocols for Operation Theatre Technicians (SPOT)	Develop knowledge and skills of OT technicians and nurses to enhance delivery of quality eye care	OT in charge, OT technicians, nurses and ophthalmic personnel's assisting doctor	10-11 November 2018 (Saturday and Sunday)	CL Gupta Eye Institute, Moradabad, UP
Standardizing Primary Eye Care Services (SPECS)	Refresher training for front-line ophthalmic personnel to perform comprehensive eye examinations for all patients	Vision Technicians, Optometrists and Ophthalmic Assistants	16-17 November 2018 (Friday and Saturday)	Dr Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital, Delhi
Optical Dispensing	Build capacities of technicians and optical personnel in dispensing spectacles in different settings (Base hospital, Vision Center, Screening	Vision Technicians, Optometrists and Ophthalmic Assistants	11 - 12 January 2019 (Friday and Saturday)	Siliguri Greater Lions Eye Hospital, Siliguri, West Bengal

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Board Meeting

The 59th Board Meeting of VISION 2020 INDIA was held on 24 August 2018 at New Delhi. We thank Orbis India for hosting the meeting.

DDG (O), NPCB, Dr Sangeeta Abrol was invited to attend the meeting. The meeting was an opportunity to introduce our Board members present at the meeting to her.



ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Executive Committee meetings

Three meetings of the **Executive Committee** was held in this quarter on 4 July, 1 August and 15 September.

CAB Meeting

A meeting with our Corporate Advisory Board (CAB) was held at Hyderabad on 16 September.



Visitors to Secretariat

Mr DN Sharma, Rotary Eye Hospital, Udhampur visited VISION 2020 INDIA office on 13 July 2018 to discuss about their organisation's growth and also requested to conduct a workshop at his organization in Udhampur, J&K.

Dr Sarangadhar Samal from Kalinga Eye Hospital, Dhenkanal, Odisha visited VISION 2020 INDIA office on 09 August 2018. During the discussion, he updated the Secretariat regarding his organization's ongoing work & progress and also requested to organize some event at his hospital.

Visit to of our member organisations

Mr Mrinal R Madhaw, Programme Manager, VISION 2020 INDIA visited three of our member organisations from West zone on 27 September 2018.

- Udaigiri Lions Eye Hospital
- Dr DS Karad Eye Hospital
- Miragi Netralaya, Latur

HIGHLIGHTS

The Eye Donation fortnight from 25 August to 8 September was observed throughout the country, especially the organisations working in eye health. A glimpse of events held by our member organisation



Left: (clockwise) Jorhat Lions Eye Hospital, Sir Gangaram Hospital, Gomabai Eye Hospital, Shankar Eye Foundation, Pushpagiri Vitero Retina Institute

Left: (clockwise) Jorhat Lions Eye Hospital, Sir Gangaram Hospital, Gomabai Eye Hospital, Shankar Eye Foundation, Pushpagiri Vitero Retina Institute

Meetings from Dr. Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital

It gives me immense pleasure to realize that our Eye Bank has completed the milestone of 13 years of uninterrupted eye banking. I have been our esteemed partner in our Mission making a lasting impact on the eradication of blindness in India by providing quality care to all sections of the society". With your help we have been able to make a difference in the lives of more than 10 million people, who have been saved from blindness. My organisation is blessed with prayers of all those who have been restored here.

33वां राष्ट्रीय नेत्रदान पखवाड़ा से प्रेरित पोस्टर एवं स्लोगन प्रतियोगिता

25th Aug 2018 to 8th Sept 2018
MCKG Medical College, Berhampur
Rally on Eye Donation

Manisha Acharya
Charge Eye bank
Dr. Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital

Right: Sri Sadguru Netra Chikitsalaya, CL Gupta Eye Institute, Dr Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital

नेत्रदान कर दूसरों की जिंदगी में फैलाएं उजाला

लखनऊ। केजीएमयू के कुलपति प्रो. एमएलबी भट्ट ने कहा कि नेत्रदान कर दूसरों की जिंदगी में उजाला फैलाने का संकल्प हर व्यक्ति को लेना चाहिए। नेत्रदान से ही अंधता की समस्या का निवारण हो सकता है। वह शनिवार को ब्राउन हॉल में आयोजित राष्ट्रीय नेत्रदान सप्ताह के उद्घाटन समारोह को संबोधित कर रहे थे।

इस दौरान विभिन्न स्थानों से आए नेत्रदान के लिए जागरूक करने वाले समाजसेवियों को सम्मानित किया गया। मौके पर पूर्व बीजीवी सुखखान सिंह, नेत्ररोम विभागध्यक्ष प्रो. विनीता सिंह, डॉ. अरुण कुमार

राष्ट्रीय नेत्रदान सप्ताह में केजीएमयू वीसी ने की प्रतीक

ब्राउन हॉल में नेत्रदान सप्ताह के उद्घाटन समारोह को संबोधित करते केजीएमयू वीसी।

जागरूकता फैला रहीं एकता पांडेय

जारी हुआ नया हेल्पलाइन नंबर

Bottom Left: Sitapur Eye Hospital, Shija Eye Care Foundation, MGM Eye Institute. Below: Sankara Eye Hospital



FEATURE

Sunderbans: surmounting challenges to deliver eye health

Selma Hembram, 68 hailing from Santhal tribe waited for 3 long years to regain her vision lost to cataract. Living in Sunderbans' last hanging island, Patahar Pratima, separated by a deep forest and river, Selma did not have access to eye care facilities, but more importantly a qualified counsellor, who could address her fear of surgery.

A large number of West Bengal's Sunderbans islanders face a similar fate. For them local traditional medical practitioners are the first contact and in several areas, the only. Commonly known barriers of lack of adequate health centres, awareness and health seeking behaviour afflicted Sunderbans, a short 2 hour drive from the Kolkata, the capital of West Bengal.

Some challenges however, are as distinctive to this island as its mangroves - geographical, communication, low population density, abject poverty and accessibility. The 52 inhabited islands of the total 106 are connected through rivulets, each rivulet the width of a river. Sightsavers had their task cut out for them when they launched their five year long 'Eye Health Systems Strengthening Project' from 2013 culminating in 2018.



Boats being the only way of commuting.

In a significant impact the blindness prevalence in Sundarbans was significantly reduced to 0.7% as per the project's end-line survey.

The prevalence of blindness in Sunderbans was a high 1.9%* - higher than the national average of 1.00 % as per the NPCB RAAB survey 2007, when the project was launched. (*As per the findings from the Sightsavers' baseline survey 2014)

The 'Eye Health Systems Strengthening Project' aimed at addressing the urgent need for improving eye health in select blocks of North 24 Parganas and South 24 Parganas of Sunderbans Islands, West Bengal, India. The project was supported by Standard Chartered Bank as a part of their 'Seeing is Believing' campaign and was implemented in partnership with Southern Health Improvement Society-SHIS, Sundarbans Social Development Centre- SSDC and Vivekananda Mission Ashram-VMA) and the two district government hospitals.

"The project adopted a two pronged approach, providing primary eye care services to the community through Vision Centres, and strengthening the eye health system in the Sundarbans through developing a cadre of eye health professionals from the community. Sightsavers also supported infrastructural improvements within existing primary and secondary health centres, both at the government and non-governmental levels," Said Mr R N Mohanty, CEO, Sightsavers about the project.

FEATURE

The project incorporated the provision of free corrective surgeries for specific categories, such as cataract cases among children and the elderly with financial difficulties in association the District Blindness Control Program. It provided access to affordable spectacles and supported school screening and referrals. Moreover, vision centres at the block level played a pivotal role in the project. Capacity building activities for personnel associated with the project as well as those working on eye health within the local public health systems were also undertaken.



A Boat Clinic

To a large extent, the objectives of the project have been achieved. As per the final project report, 392,117 adults were screened of whom 205,033 people refracted and 30,814 provided with cataract surgery; 448,617 school children screened and 7637 received free spectacles. Ninety nine (99) children with congenital cataract also received appropriate surgical intervention.

Beyond the number crunching, the project has created a lasting environment of awareness, of changed perception and built trust among people of the islands towards eye health seeking behaviour. "When we arrived in Sunderbans, people did not trust us. They would rather believe their traditional healers," shares Dr Asim Sil, Medical Director, VMA, one of the implementing partners. "But some successful surgeries later, we were able to win the trust of the islanders. If we planned to get 30 patients finally 45 patients would arrive. The extra patients would push themselves in the already crowded bus to seek treatment."



To cater to the population in Sunderbans, the project has developed 17 vision centres housed at blocks with trained cadre to man. The core of every vision centre was based on the concept of sustainability which aimed towards generating enough revenue to be able to support the expenses like running cost of VC, salary of one VT and one community health worker.

Talking about the mantra towards achieving the set goals, Dr Sandeep Buttan, Global Technical Lead- Eye Health (Asia), Sightsavers said, "We realised that if a district level impact is desired, an intense pan district program involving all players (eye health and others) is essential. The intensity of our intervention was much higher than elsewhere! There was strong focus on creating lasting behaviour change and generating evidence for impact." "Every block was targeted for interventions including vision centres in each of them and use of GIS technology for planning and monitoring. Very close follow up of activities and outcomes, every month."

"It was a wonderful experience of team work with 3 partners along with Sightsavers. It was a cohesive unit and we all worked in a seamless manner," was the lasting impression shared by Dr Asim Sil.