

**International Agency for the Prevention of
Blindness**

CENTRAL/WEST AFRICA WORKSHOP

ACCRA, GHANA

24-25 April 2023

Workshop Report



Background

A two-day workshop for the IAPB Central and West Africa region was held in Accra, Ghana on the 24th and 25th of April 2023 at The Royale Fiesta Hotel with an aim to unpack the [2030 IN SIGHT Strategy](#) and equip the participants with the tools for implementation. The Ghana Red Cross Society acted as the local partner for the meeting providing on the ground administrative and logistical support. The workshop brought together 22 participants from different cadres of the eye health systems/sector drawn from IAPB, ministry of health and IAPB member organizations participated in the workshop. The workshop covered various topics including the 2030 In Sight Strategy, Eye care in health systems, Elevate, Integrate, Activate and IPEC implementation in practice. The workshop methodology was interactive as the facilitators ensured that knowledge was not only disseminated but accurately perceived and understood by the participants. To achieve this, participants engaged in discussions and kept the forum open for feedback, queries and suggestions.

The workshop harnessed the experience of the participants in implementing eye health programs to engage in objective discussions around strategic planning to implement 2030 In Sight resulting in plans for each pillar: Elevate; Integrate; Activate. In the final session, participants were called upon to commit to one activity item which they would implement within the next three months.

Workshop Objectives

The workshop objectives were to:

- Highlight how the 2030 IN SIGHT strategy can be implemented at the regional and national level
- Showcase tools for delivering the strategy
- To collectively agree on the ambition for implementing the 2030 In Sight strategy

The workshop was opened by Mr. Solomon Gayoni, acting secretary general of the Ghana Red Cross Society. He welcomed the participants to the workshop and reflected on the three-decade journey of the Red Cross Society in eye health in Ghana and their contribution towards access, quality, capacity building, system strengthening and service delivery to ensure inclusive eye health services. Through collaboration with the Ghana Health Services, Ghana Red Cross Society has developed a Volunteer Training Manual which is tailored to fit into the aspirations of the WHO as presented in its AFRO PEC Manual. He acknowledged the collaboration between the Ghana Red Cross Society and The International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness which has brought together the eye health stakeholders on deliberate on action points to move the eye agenda forward.

At minimum he stated that the Ghana Red Cross Society offers itself as a partner of choice to complement the efforts of the MOH/WHO to raise awareness on the global magnitude and impact of eye conditions and vision impairment.

Session: 2030 In Sight: Ending Avoidable Sight Loss, presented by Dr. Aaron Magava.

The IAPB Regional Chair for Africa Dr. Magava, unpacked the 2030 In Sight Strategy, the sector's strategic plan leading up to 2030. He expressed it as a call to action to embed vision as a fundamental, economic, social and development issue, incorporate eye health in wider health care systems and drive patient, consumer and market change. All of which are fundamental to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

He said 2030 In Sight built on so much great work already done and that it recognizes that the challenge has changed, and we must work differently to ensure eyesight receives the political, health and development priority it needs and deserves. He went on to explain the three overarching pillars of the strategy:

- ELEVATE vision as a fundamental economic, social and development issue.
- INTEGRATE eye health in wider health care systems.
- ACTIVATE patient, consumer and market change.

[Access the 2030 IN SIGHT presentation here](#)

Session: Eye Health and System Change presented by Ms. Anna McKeon

IAPB's Director of policy, strategy and advocacy, Ms. Anna McKeon took the participants through the process of systems change and the areas within the eye health system where transformational change is needed. In alignment with the 2030 In Sight, she gave the following examples as potential areas to be tapped by the stakeholders:

- Recognizing eye health as a fundamental development issue
- Integrating eye health into health care systems
- Raising the importance of eye health in children and at school
- Supporting employers and workers to prioritize eye health.
- Ensuring sustainable business market models so glasses and eye products are available to all.

She pointed out that the process of changing the systems requires the consideration of the whole system and not a single aspect of it. It also entails identification of actors who are best placed to create change, building a culture of learning from previous successes and failures, shifting from reactive problem solving to co-creating initiatives for the future and trying new approaches while embracing emergent opportunities. She engaged the stakeholders in a process of identifying different actors in eye care.

[Access the Eye Health and Systems Change presentation here](#)

Activity

Participants broke into groups tasked where, based on particular patient journeys, they were asked to map the health system and identify the stakeholders who needed to be engaged to achieve the respective pathways.

See stakeholder maps: [Stakeholder Map 1](#)/ [Stakeholder Map 2](#)/ [Stakeholder Map 3](#)

Elevate:

The first component of the workshop focused on elevating the eye health agenda at the regional, sub-regional and national level.

Session: WHO AFRO: The situation of Eye Health in Africa, presented by Dr Prebo Barango, WHO AFRO

Dr Barango stated that Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD's) and their risk factors are increasing exponentially in the AFRO region with countries in the region among those with the highest probability of dying from NCDs globally. In terms of a regional level commitment to eye health he referenced the [Brazzaville declaration on noncommunicable diseases prevention and control in the WHO African Region in 2011](#), where Member States in the WHO African Region acknowledged

the significant evidence regarding the burden of diseases attributable to multiple NCD's including eye diseases and reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening national health systems as the basis of a comprehensive approach to equitable health outcomes.

Dr Barango presented on the WHO AFRO plan on Eye Health for the 2023-24 biennium which focus on strengthening the following area: governance, strategic information and surveillance, capacity building and service delivery. He pointed out however that a sever limitation to the implementation of the WHO AFRO workplan on eye health was lack of resources. In particular, he pointed to the absence of an eye health focal point withing the organisation stating that the position of eye health focal point exists within the WHO AFRO, NCD, organigram however this is not filled due to lack of funding. Dr Barango reminded participants of the period of productivity when an eye health focal point was in place and called on support for the recruitment in this regard. Dr Barango stated that WHO Country Offices were available to support IPEC implementation activities however the capacity of the respective offices may vary. He made the offer to participants that they could contact him to help mobilise WHO AFRO Country Offices in this regard and shared his email address: barangop@who.int

Session: Sub Regional Advocacy: West Africa Health Organization - Regional reporting on Eye Health Indicators, Mr. Senanu Quacoe, IAPB co-Chair for Francophone West Africa

Following the 12th joint annual WAHO meeting of the HIS, health program managers and partners held in Abuja, Nigeria in 2022, a number of eye health indicators were agreed upon to be used across the 15 Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) countries. Mr. Quacoe presented the proposed indicators which will cover the following areas:

- i. Number of consultations for eye health diseases.
- ii. Reported eye diseases in health facilities.
- iii. Refractive Errors.
- iv. Surgeries performed in health facilities.
- v. Personnel.

These indicators are in the process of being integrated into WAHO regional reporting which would oblige member states to report back eye health data on an annual basis.

[Access the WAHO Regional reporting on Eye Health Indicators presentation here](#)

Session: IAPB Global Advocacy, presented by Ms. Anna McKeon

There have been some powerful commitments that the sector came together to advocate for which has resulted in many exciting developments for global eye health. Some of the global advocacy achievements and progress include:

- **UN Friends of Vision**

- The [Friends of Vision Group](#) on the United Nations Member states consists of a group of 60 ambassadors committed to advancing eye health as part of the UN agenda for sustainable development.
- The group aims to advance the issue of eye health within the context of the SDGs, to raise its profile on the international agenda and is critical in securing the UN Resolution A/75/310– Vision for Everyone; accelerating action to achieve the sustainable development goals.
- **Envoy on Vision**
 - IAPB, with support of its members, is calling upon the UN Secretary General to appoint [a Special Envoy on Vision](#) to serve as a global champion for vision and eye health and provide a focal point for multi-sector cooperation. The [envoy](#) would support the office of the Secretary General and WHO in mobilizing national action and political commitment on vision and eye health.
 - Over 60 countries signed a joint letter to the UN Secretary General calling for the appointments and 150 global eye health organizations signed a joint letter to the Secretary General UN in support of the same.
- **UN Institutions**
 - **International Labour Organisation**
 - Collaborating with IAPB on a brief “Eye health and the world of work”. Due to be launched end of May.
 - **UN Women**
 - Collaborating with Fred Hollows Foundation on a brief on vision and gender. Due to be launched in September.
- **Voluntary National Reviews**
 - Currently, eye health doesn’t feature within the 169 targets and 232 indicators of the SDG monitoring framework. However, reference to eye health within a [Voluntary National Review](#) presents an opportunity to elevate the position of eye care within the global framework on sustainable development.
 - As part of the UN Resolution on eye care member states are encouraged to consider addressing the situation of eye health in the voluntary national reviews which support the profile of eye health.
- **WHO Advocacy**
 - **Refractive Error Resolution**
 - IAPB is currently working on a concept note to present the evidence and make a case. It is currently approaching member states to sponsor and support the resolution.
 - The key negotiations will happen in 2024.

[Access the IAPB Global Advocacy presentation here](#)

Activity: Country Group Plans Elevate

Participants broke into groups tasked with drafting plans to implement the 2030 IN SIGHT pillar, Elevate asking what will be done at country level to:

- Unlock Political will in eye health
- Set new targets for eye health
- Embrace eye health into SDG Frame works
- Embed eye heath in School and Employers (Occupational health)

See country plans to Elevate: [Group 1](#)/[Group 2](#)/[Group 3](#)/[Group 4](#)

In the last two sessions of the day the participants heard about an online platform assisting primary healthcare workers to get advice from and refer patients to specialists and then participated in a test of a National Indicator Survey.

Session: Vula Mobile by Dr. William Mapham

Dr. William Mapham made a presentation on the Vula Mobile app which is a medical referral app and online platform that makes it easy for primary health care workers to get advice from and refer patients to specialists. The app is cost effective, seamless, secure and delivers high quality and accessible healthcare.

Besides connecting healthcare workers, the vula mobile app provides monthly data and reporting which allows doctors to understand the demographics and utilization of their practice, the experience, the risk of their patients and the action outputs. Dr. Mapham stated that the system had only been utilized in South Africa but with the support from Novartis, they are looking to expand to Ghana.

Session: Pilot test of the IAPB National Indicator Survey by Mr. Simon Day

IAPB is seeking to assess, monitor and track progress in eye health towards the 2030 goals. As a vital component of the collaborative efforts in eye health, IAPB developed a set of key indicators that will used in the process. The country progress data will be provided by key informants such as the National Eye health coordinators, WHO representatives and IAPB members. Mr. Simon Day led a pilot test of the indicators by taking the participants through a set of questions intended to inform the progress of countries.

Day 2: Recap of Day 1

In a recap session by Mr. Earnest of the Ghana Red Cross Services, the participants were reminded of the previous day's activities and presentations.

Integrate:

The second component of the workshop focused on integrating eye health into the wider health care systems.

Session: Eye Care in Health Systems: A guide for action, presented by Dr. Andreas Mueller, WHO

Dr. Mueller presented Eye care in health systems: guide for action. The Guide aims to be a practical resource for countries to analyze, plan, implement and review IPEC. It outlines recommended activities towards the development of: 1. an eye care strategic plan that outlines priorities; 2. a monitoring framework linked to the eye care strategic plan; and 3. one or multiple operational plans outlining actions in support of the implementation of the eye care strategic plan. He went on to discuss the four resources, or tools, developed by WHO to support countries in their development of the IPEC implementation plans and frameworks. These are:

1. [Eye care situation analysis tool \(ECSAT\)](#) – a questionnaire-based survey tool to comprehensively assess eye care in a country.
2. [Eye care indicator menu \(ECIM\)](#) – a list of recommended eye care indicators to be collected regularly.
3. [Package of eye care interventions \(PECI\)](#) – a planning and budgeting for eye care at each level of the health system.
4. [Eye care competency framework \(ECCF\)](#) – a planning tool for eye care human resources based on competencies.

The primary audiences for the guide are governments of low- and middle-income countries and the agencies working with them to provide eye care to the people in need. It is designed for use at national level but can also be used at the subnational level. Dr. Mueller further explained that the discussed the ECSAT intends to support countries in the planning, monitoring of trends and the evaluation of progress towards implementing IPEC. The tool now aligns with the WHO strategic recommendations made in the Word report on vision. In addition to the questionnaire component, ECSAT now includes a maturity scoring system and a set of possible actions. ECSAT should be implemented under leadership of the Ministry of Health.

[Access the Eye Care in Health Systems: A guide for action presentation here](#)

Session: IPEC Implementation in Practice – The Ghana ECSAT Exercise, presented by Dr. Hornameter Afake

The WHO Eye Care Situation Analysis Tool (ECSAT), is a questionnaire based assessment tool which intends to support countries in the planning, monitoring of trends and the evaluation of progress towards implementing IPEC. The situation analysis is done as a key initial step in the development of a strategic eye care plan and should be updated every 3 to 5 years or as need be. Dr. Afake presented on findings of the situation analysis conducted in Ghana based on the components of the tool which include:

- Eye care Leadership and Governance.
- Eye care service delivery – access.
- Eye care service delivery - quality
- Eye care workforce and infrastructure
- Eye care financing
- Eye care information

[Access the Ghana ECSAT Exercise presentation here](#)

Session: The Ghana Community Health Volunteer Manual presented, by Dr. Wiafe Boateng

The participants were taken through the Primary Eye Care Volunteers Manual which was developed with an aim of strengthening the ability of the Ghana Red Cross Society's volunteers to complement the work of the frontline health workers who are required to offer basic eye health services in line with the WHO AFRO Primary Eye Care Manual. The development of the manual involved a process of desk top reviews of existing manuals, several visits to the field to establish the nature of the volunteer's activities, development of the core activities and competencies required to ensure effectiveness, formation of a technical team to develop the manual and several reviews of the draft till the final version was accepted.

Dr. Wiafe stated that the volunteers will not be required to make a diagnosis or prescribe medication, however, through the manual, they will be imparted with knowledge to professionally conduct community mobilization, strengthen their ability to undertake eye health promotion activities in their communities receive complaints and conduct basis assessments to refer when necessary and to offer first aid in case of ocular injuries.

[Access the Ghana Community Health Volunteer Manual presentation here](#)

Session: Advocating for IPEC, presented by Ms. Junu Shrestha

IAPB's Junu Shrestha presented on advocating for Integrated People-centered Eye Care. IPEC refers to eye care services that are managed and delivered to assure a continuum of promotive, preventive, treatments and rehabilitative interventions against the spectrum of eye conditions. IPEC is vital in ensuring equity in access, responsiveness and participation, resilience, quality and

efficiency. Ms. Junu expounded on 5 advocacy approaches; Prepare and Coordinate, initiate a national policy dialogue, develop an integrated strategic plan for eye health, communicate outcomes and monitor and evaluate. To advocate successfully, individuals must work together, build relationships with key policy influencers and decision makers, be clear on the objectives throughout the journey and grab local opportunity.

Ms. Shrestha presented on the advocacy to action toolkit which is a central reference point for key information, tools, templates, and resources to advocate for and initiate policy dialogue process for implementation of Integrated People-Centered Eye Care (IPEC) in countries. The toolkit will be beneficial for advocates working in the eye health and other health sectors, broader social and development sectors, and government ministries.

[Access the Advocating for IPEC presentation here](#)

Activity: Country Groups Plan Integrate

Participants again broke into groups tasked with drafting country plans to implement the 2030 IN SIGHT pillar, Integrate, asking what will be done at country level to:

- Pursue the inclusion of eye health into Universal Health Coverage
- Deliver Integrated People Centre Eye Care
- Build Resilient Work Force
- Embrace Technological Solutions

See country plans to Integrate: [Group 1](#)/[Group 2](#)/[Group 3](#)

Activate

Session: Focusing the world's attention on the importance of eye care: World Sight Day and Love Your Eyes, presented by Simon Darvill,

IAPB's Simon Darvill presented on World Sight Day. He appreciated the members and the stakeholders for walking the journey with IAPB and their contributions in commemorating the World Sight Day which contributed to IAPB winning 'The Association of the Year' and the 'Love Your Eyes' campaign winning the campaign of the year based on the growth of the campaign and the potential for growth.

He provided an update on the achievements of 2022 Love your eyes campaign stating that it was even bigger than the previous year with members engaging in screening of parliamentarians and key decision makers in their respective countries while IAPB carried out screening at the UN headquarters in New York. There were massive media engagements as well as pledges.

In 2023, Mr Darvill reiterated the call all stakeholders to focus on 'Love your eyes at Work' in the 2023 campaign which will focus on the world of work. Members are encouraged to engage in related activities such as sight tests and screenings in the workplace.

[Access the World Sight Day and Love Your Eyes presentation here](#)

Activity: Country Groups Plan Activate

Participants again broke into groups tasked with drafting country plans to implement the 2030 IN SIGHT pillar, Activate, asking what will be done at country level to:

- Campaign at new level
- Tackle Stigma
- Build Public Private Partnership
- Create the right regulatory environment

See country plans to Activate: [Group 1](#)/[Group 2](#)/[Group 3](#)/[Group 4](#)

Activity: Pulling the country plans together – Elevate/ Integrate/ Activate

Remaining in their respective groups, participants collated their implementation plans of the three pillars to form a 2030 IN SIGHT implementation plans. These plans were to be held by the Ministry of Health representatives and supported by the members.

Stakeholders were then requested to commit to undertake one activity from their respective country plan to be carried out within the next six months.

Stakeholder Commitments towards implementing 2030 IN SIGHT by end July 2023

NAME	ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY	ROLE	COMMITMENT
Ibrahim Abdallah	Orbis International	Ghana	Global Director - Asia, Africa	Engage with other stakeholders to explore areas of partnerships.
Mr. Robert Alibo	Vision Action	Ghana	Country Director	To be practically involved in the Technical Working Group for the completion of the strategic plan of Ghana; to participate in the meetings and provide data.
Joseph Oye	IAPB	Cameroon	West Anglo Co-chair	Have a debriefing session with the Eye Health Coordinator in Cameroon and identify one system change objective and implement.
Christopher Junge	Novartis	Germany	Global Business Associate, Avoidable Blindness	To continue leveraging the power of partnerships to help prevent avoidable blindness through data collection and reporting back on impact.
Emmanuel Kumah	Operation Eyesight Universal	Ghana	Country Director	To lead Operation Eyesight Universal Ghana Program to work with stakeholders including Ghana Health Service, Ghana Education Service, Communities, other Eye NGOs and eye professionals to declare many more communities as avoidable sight loss free communities.
Dr. William Mapham	Vula	South Africa	CEO	Commit to engage , get advice on how Vula can be used to have impact in Ghana.
Dr. Cinthia Manzan	Novartis	French & Anglophone West Africa Cluster	Health Systems Strengthening partnerships specialist	Improve public-private partnership in daily work. Support the local institution in eye care to implement their strategy.
Evelyn Ngaanuma	Vision Action	Ghana	Project Manager	Make a presentation and share the 2030 In Sight Strategy to colleagues during the organization's June Program Team Meeting.

Kristine Nyabera	IAPB	Africa	Programme Officer	To support/follow up on the stakeholders in implementation of their commitments. Support the members in Ghana in commemoration of the World Sight Day towards the 2023 theme 'At Your Work'.
Ernest K.P. Nyame-Anaan	Ghana Red Cross Society	Ghana		To mobilize volunteers for training on the volunteers manuals. To give feedback of the workshop to fellow colleagues.
Adolf Ollennu	Orbis International	Ghana	Program Director	Hold a meeting with regional maternal health unit of GHS Ashanti region about opportunities to integrate components of eye health into maternal health.
Senanu Quacoe-Wossinu	IAPB	West Africa - Franco	West Franco co-chair	To liaise with the WAHO to give them feedback on the workshop/meeting and ask for an ECOWAS forum on the 2030 In Sight Strategy.
Dr. Boateng Wiafe	Operation Eyesight Universal	Ghana	Inclusive Eye Health Advisor	To ensure Red Cross Volunteer training is cascaded. Train TOTs to cascade to the volunteers the manual.
Dr. Hornamator Afake	Ghana Health Services	Ghana	National Eye Health Coordinator	To ensure high level dissemination of ECSAT findings.
Dr. Addy James	HCP Cure Blindness	Ghana		Work with Assemblies in Tamale. Work on collaborations with Novartis.
Daniel Dutse	Lead for Africa	Ghana	Lead for Africa	increase awareness about vision through eye screening. Reduce stigma towards persons with visual impairment by having a cooking competition among persons with blindness.

IAPB Central/ West Africa Sub-Regional Workshop Programme 24-25 April 2023, Accra, Ghana

24 April 2023 – Day 1		
Schedule	Agenda item	Format/ Presenter
08h30	Registration	
09h00	Welcome & meeting objectives	Mr. Simon Day
09h10	Introductions	Plenary
09h30	2030 In Sight: Ending Avoidable Sight Loss	Dr. Aaron Magava
10h00	Eye health and systems change	Ms. Anna McKeon
11h00	Comfort break and group photo	
	Elevate	
11h30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHO AFRO: Supporting member states to achieve Universal Health Coverage for Eye Care in the African region • Sub-regional Advocacy: WAHO Regional Reporting on EH Indicators • IAPB Global Advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Prebo Barango, WHO AFRO • Mr. Senanu Quacoe • Ms. Anna McKeon
12h30	Lunch	
13h30	Workshop: Country Groups Plan Elevate	Group work and present back <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country Groups
15h00	Comfort break	
15h30	Vula Mobile	Dr. Will Mapham
16h00	Pilot test of the IAPB National Indicator Survey	Mr. Simon Day
16h30	End day 1 Take-away from the day	All participants

25 April 2023 – Day 2

Schedule	Agenda item	Format/ Presenter
09h00	Recap of day 1	The Ghana Red Cross Society
	Integrate	
09h30	Eye Care in health systems: A Guide for action	Dr. Andreas Mueller, WHO HQ
10h15	IPEC Implementation in practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ghana ECSAT exercise • The Ghana Community Health Volunteer Manual • Advocating for IPEC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Hornameter Afake • Dr. Boateng Wiafe/ GRCS • Ms. Junu Shrestha
10h45	Comfort Break	
11h00	Workshop: Country Groups Plan Integrate	Group work and present back <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country Groups
12h30	Lunch	
	Activate	
13h30	Focusing the world's attention on the importance of eye care: World Sight Day and Love Your Eyes	Mr. Simon Darvill
14h00	Workshop: Country Groups Plan Activate	Group work and present back <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country Groups
15h00	Comfort break	
	Conclusion	
15h15	Member outlook on planned process	Plenary Discussion
15h45	Brief summary of systems change from the past 2 days	Ms. Anna McKeon
16h00	Wrap up	Dr. Aaron Magava
16h30	End of day 2 – Closure of meeting	The Ghana Red Cross Society

**IAPB Central & West Africa Sub-Regional Meeting
List of Participants**

Title	First Name	Surname	Organisation
Mr	Thomas	Aapore	Ghana Red Cross Society
Mr	Ibrahim	Abdallah	Orbis International
Dr	Carl	Abraham	Velux Stiftung/ University of Cape Coast
Dr	James	Addy	HCP Cure Blindness
Dr	Hornameter	Afake	Ghana Health Services
Mr	Robert	Alibo	Vision Action
Mr	Simon	Day	IAPB
Mr	Daniel	Dutse	Lead for Africa
Mr	Joseph	Enyegue Oye	IAPB
Mr	Solomon	Gayoni	Ghana Red Cross Society
Mr	Christopher	Junge	Novartis
Mr	Emmanuel	Kumah	Operation Eyesight Universal
Dr	Aaron	Magava	IAPB
Ms	Cinthia	Manzan	Novartis
Dr	William	Mapham	Vula Mobile
Ms	Anna	McKeon	IAPB
Ms	Evelyn	Ngaanuma	Vision Action
Ms	Kristine	Nyabera	IAPB

Mr	Ernest K. P.	Nyame-Annan	Ghana Red Cross Society
Mr	Adolf	Ollenu	Orbis International
Mr	Senanu	Quacoe-Wossinu	IAPB
Dr	Boateng	Wiafe	Operation Eyesight Universal