



International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
APRIL 8-9, 2013**

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CONSENT AGENDA ITEM 1.8 : IAPB REGIONAL UPDATES – LATIN AMERICA

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## LATIN AMERICA PROGRESS REPORT OCT 2012 - MAR 2013

### Significant achievements

#### Research and publications

- At the time of writing, our paper on the Risk Factors of Age-Related Macular Degeneration in Argentina has been accepted for publication in the *Arquivos Brasileiro de Oftalmologia*.
- The Cataract, Diabetic Retinopathy (DR), and Low Vision Guidelines have been published in both Spanish and English.
- In the period 2 Spanish editions of The Community Eye Health Journal have been published covering the topics of Instruments and Low Vision.
- 5 regional RAAB trainers have now been accredited by the International Centre for Eye Health, an outcome of a RAAB training that took place in Panama in December 2012, another important step in regional capacity-building.

#### Community Eye Health Courses and Related Training

- Community Eye Health (CEH) courses and related training opportunities have increased each year with a wide variety of subjects covered from general CEH training, CEH for residents, DR, retinopathy of prematurity (ROP), cataract, low vision, CEH management, RAAB trainings, and instrument maintenance. In the past year, an impressive 542 professionals working in all aspects of eye health were trained through V2020 LA activities in Mexico, Peru, Brazil, Chile, El Salvador, and Guatemala.
- For 2013, we currently have planned a national planning workshop in Uruguay; low vision training in Peru; the V2020 LA Congress in Mexico in September; RAABs in Honduras, Bolivia, and Argentina; an Instrument Maintenance Courses in Paraguay; a ROP Workshop in Colombia; CEH Management Courses in Paraguay and Honduras; and residents' training in Brazil. It is a significant achievement that Brazil, Chile, and Mexico, the 3 economic powers of the region, now officially recognize the CEH courses in their curricula for residents.

#### New WHO Action Plan

The recent resolution at the WHO Executive Board meeting supporting the approval of the new action plan 'Towards Universal Eye Health' was proposed by Mexico, seconded by Panama and backed by Costa Rica, Bolivia, Cuba and Venezuela, testimony of the success V2020 LA has had in advocacy in the region.

The regional enthusiasm for this plan will carry over with the upcoming meeting organized by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in Ecuador to report on the progress of the 2009 PAHO plan and to develop a new regional PAHO plan for 2014-2019 based on the new WHO plan.

## Key Opportunities to Move Forward the Eye Health Agenda in the Region

### Evaluation and Related Strategic and Operational Planning

In February, an evaluation meeting was held by ORBIS in Orlando, Florida, with Joan McLeod-Omawale, to review and evaluate the outcomes of the initial 2.5-year agreement between ORBIS and IAPB. The evaluation went well, noting our successes in CEH training and publications that have often gone above and beyond project expectations. This evaluation was followed by an IAPB regional planning meeting, which drafted our operational plan to support the framework of the V2020 LA Strategic Plan. Drafted in 2012 this focuses on the key activities of advocacy, communications and visibility, capacity-building and institutional development, research, and resource management.

### Potential Regional Partnerships

A very exciting development we are working on is our potential regional partnerships with the TelMex Foundation and Rotary International. We are engaged in ongoing dialogue with both organisations with regards to the potential development of regional pilots for sustainable eye care programs in 3-5 countries. Additionally, we are also planning with TelMex a DR screening and service delivery study to take place in Costa Rica this year.

Potential partnerships with TelMex and Rotary could mean significant financial resources to further carry-out our strategic plan. These developments are demonstration of the V2020 LA program success in the region and the generous support of our current partners, especially ORBIS, who enable us to further leverage funding from new partners and organizations.

### Key Events in the 1st Semester 2013

In addition to the PAHO planning meeting in Ecuador that is mentioned above, we are also looking forward to holding the first CEH Management Course for Central America in the next few months. This course will be organized in Honduras. A CEH management is greatly needed in the Central American region, where blindness prevention and CEH programming is not as developed as it is in the rest of Latin America. We are also conducting a RAAB in Honduras in March.