



International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness

IAPB NORTH AMERICA REGION Quarterly Report Oct-Dec 2012

I want to update the members of the North America region on activities that have taken place since the 9th General Assembly. I prefer to organize them by major topic groups and not in strict chronological sequence.

WORLD SIGHT DAY (WSD)

This year WSD was observed throughout the region. Here is a list of some representative websites that highlight some of those activities.

- [CBM Canada](#)
- [I Stock Analyst news report](#)
- [Seva Canada](#)
- [Optometry Giving Sight](#)
- [Lions Clubs International Foundation](#)

In addition, the major activity **in the USA** was a Congressional briefing that was well attended with presentations by representatives of the Centers for Disease Control and the National Eye Institute. This was a high profile event and there are plans to make it an annual event on WSD. More information can be found [on this website](#).

In the Caribbean, every country held events on WSD, frequently involving the Minister of Health or other high profile personage.

HAITI COORDINATION

First steps have taken place following on the recommendation taken at the Regional meeting in Hyderabad to improve coordination on the part of NGO's working in Haiti. An informal meeting was held in Chicago in November, which identified those groups currently working in Haiti. Subsequently, an informal email chain has been established.

We are working out the details as to the future means this communication will take. Currently involved are the International Eye Foundation (IEF), ORBIS, Lions Clubs International Federation (LCIF) and IAPB. This is meant to be a very open process and I encourage others to join. You can start by [emailing me](#).

CARIBBEAN VISION 2020 MEETING

This took place in Georgetown, Guyana on December 11 and 12. Coordinated by Caribbean Council for the Blind (CCB), it brought together all but 2 countries in the region as well as several NGO's (ORBIS, Sightsavers, Brien Holden Foundation) as well as the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).



For those not familiar with the work in the Caribbean, it will come as welcome news that they have taken VISION 2020 to a new level. Each country presented achievements in the past year and they have been impressive. Cataract surgery rates exceed the target of 2000 in at least 5 of the countries. WSD and/or Glaucoma Awareness Days are held in all countries. At the same time clinical research projects that have real relevance and that can be used to confirm programmatic initiatives have been undertaken. Refractionist and optometric education programs have been established and there is commitment to addressing uncorrected refractive error.

This brief report cannot do justice to the accomplishments of the sub region and so I recommend the [CCB website](#) for further information.

Please let me know any other news you would like circulated.

**Louis Pizzarello, MD MPH,
IAPB Regional Chair for North America**