Inauguration of the workshop 15th October 2014

The workshop started at 8.30 am with the registration of participants. At 9.00 am Dr Asela Abeydeera started the event by welcoming and inviting the guests to lighten the traditional oil lamp. Dr Palitha Mahipala DGHS and National Focal Point of Vision 2020 delivered the welcome/introduction speech of the workshop. Thereafter the session one started.

Session 1:

Session one was focused on “Where are we? Situation Analysis” to have a look back to uncover the hindering factors of eye care services. Representative Key stakeholders of the Vision 2020 programme were invited to present related topics.

First Presentation was on Magnitude of blindness and visual impairment problem in the country by Dr Lalitha Senarath, President of the College of Ophthalmologists of Sri Lanka. She had outlined the projected data about blindness and visual impairment based on the data available. She further explained how different eye conditions contribute the burden of blindness in SL. Existing situation of Human resource, Infrastructure, Service availability, Accessibility, Blindness and service coverage were also taken into the account in her presentation.

Dr Mangala Gamage, focal point for PEC and CBL briefed about the projects and programmes conducted. Introduction of Primary Eye Care Programme in Sri Lanka and integration of it into the existing PHC system was described. Development of ROP services were also highlighted.

Dr Saman Senanayake focal point of Low vision & refractive errors has explained how LV services developed gradually in Sri Lanka reaching desired milestones. Development of LV clinics, services and databases were presented.

Dr Muditha Kulatunga briefed about the Glaucoma services in the country and introduction and incorporation of glaucoma services into PEC system.

Dr Binara Amarasinghe highlighted the activities taken place during the last seven years in relation to diabetic retinopathy Services with its objectives plus and weak points.

Dr Kala Sivayoganathan the focal point for cataract presented about the recent developments of cataract programme with the involvement of Vision 2020.
Representatives of donor organizations expressed their views and tasks they have performed.

- Dr Sunil Fernando, Country Director of Sightsavers and CBM Country Representative
- Ms Nirmi Vitharana summarized the collaborative activities of the organizations implemented with Vision 2020 programme.

Following the tea break, the opportunity was given to the regional health authorities to present their achievements.

- Dr Sanath de Silva, Director National Eye Hospital, presented about the activities of it over the last few years with vision 2020 programme.
- Dr Karthi keyan RDHS Kilinochchi has given a brief account of Vision 2020 related activities taken place in Kilinochchi along with the process of resettlement and rebuilding.
- Dr Senaka Thalagala, RDHS Ampara was unable to participate at this workshop.
- Dr PDK Adikari RDHS Monaragala explained how Vision 2020 projects helped to uplift the eye care services in Monaragala area over the past half decade.

**Session 2:**

- Dr Taraprasad Das Regional Chair IAPB SEAR conducted a very informative and mind blowing presentation on Vision 2020 the right to sight global campaign, National Policies on Eye Health and National Plan of Actions. He described the different systems of eye care practiced in neighboring countries and how they achieved targets. More attention was paid towards the Global Action Plan of Vision 2020 Initiative.
- Mr Yuddha Sapkota IAPB Coordinator shared his experience on non integrated Eye care Service model of Nepal. Many interesting points were noted in the eye care services delivery system in Nepal.
- Next item of the workshop was a SWOT Analysis of existing eye care service in Sri Lanka. The audience was divided into three groups for this purpose. Each group was lead by a focal point and supported by V2020 secretariat staff for the documentation purpose. The groups were assigned to analyze Infrastructure and technology, HR and Service delivery. There were in depth discussions among members of each group to build up the analysis.
- First day session concluded with the group work.

**Session 3: 16th October 2014**

The theme of the second day session was,

Identify the existing issues and challenges the inhibiting factors to achieve the goal of vision 2020 and incorporating WHO global action plan.
The first item of the day was the presentations by each group.

- Dr M Malaravan presented SWOT analysis of HR related problems
- Dr Kapila Edussuriya presented about the service delivery
- Dr P D K Adikari presented infrastructure issues.

Mr Yuddha Sapkota conducted the concluding presentation including a summary of identified challenges, based on global action plan objectives and activities, and recommendations of the IAPB towards better eye care in the country. An in depth analysis of the problems in eye care was taken in to the account in his presentation.

Dr Palitha Mahipala concluded the workshop making a summary of discussions and he stressed about the importance of making clear strategies for the development of eye care services. And he thanked everybody for making this event a success.

Dr T P Das has given the audience his words of wisdom making the audience pleased.

Dr Kala Sivayoganathan delivered the vote of thanks appreciating the hard work of all involved parties.

The workshop has come to an end with that.

**Final Recommendations made from the outcomes of the IAPB meeting held.**

**Human Resource Development**

1. Measures to be taken to keep eye care professionals in the country preventing migration.
2. Mal distribution of eye care professional is to be prevented by allocating them in a fair distribution.
3. Training of community leaders to identify, refer and follow up patients with eye conditions.
4. Request for more govt. allocation for HR to ensure motivation of them
5. Actions to prevent skilled professionals in eye care transferring to other specialties frequently.
6. Request for a more organized coordinating mechanism among the professional for more organized work.
7. Adjustment to the cadres of eye care professionals according to the country’s requirements.
8. Regular training and CME programmes to update knowledge of HR
9. Qualifications of service providers in the private sector to be evaluated and actions to be taken to upgrade their services.

**Infrastructure & technology**

1. Measures to ensure equal distribution of equipment & instrument
2. To provide all basic infrastructure needs to all eye units.
3. Establishment of a maintenance system for the eye equipment.
4. Provide dedicated operation theatres and adequate operating time for eye surgeons
5. To formulate a national level policy in eye care for eye care development.

Service delivery

1. Strengthen integration of eye care system to the health care.
2. Establishment of a proper data management system
3. Increase public awareness about eye ailments and available treatment options.
4. A link to be established between eye care and elderly care.
5. Standardization of work carried out by INGO/NGO in eye care.
6. Sustainability of eye care programmes to be thought of, especially when NGO funds are no more available. Measures to be taken to absorb such projects to govt. system to ensure continued operations.
7. Risk of losing donors to be minimized by persuading them for more new projects.
8. Ensuring proper utilization of donor funds.
9. Steps to be taken to minimize bureaucratic interruptions to eye care programmes.

These recommendations are produced to the higher officials in the Ministry of Health for implementation. They will minimize the problems in eye care services in Sri Lanka.

A follow up event/ workshop will be planned in the next year 2015 to evaluate the progress of the recommendations provided by this workshop.

Report & recommendations written by,

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Some Pictures of the event (Next page.....)