



2026 Global Summit for Eye Health

Draft Guidance

Zambia Strategy to Secure Government Commitments

Purpose and Status of this Document

This document is **Draft Guidance** intended to support a strategic process to explore, shape, and secure potential Government of Zambia commitments in the lead-up to the **2026 Global Summit for Eye Health**. It is propositional rather than prescriptive and is designed to support structured discussion, consultation, and iterative refinement with the **National Department of Health (NDOH)** and key eye health stakeholders.

Timeframes included are indicative. Face-to-face engagement is considered important throughout the process. Exact dates, sequencing, and formats will be adapted to Zambia's policy environment, planning cycles, and decision-making processes.

Overview of the Global Summit for Eye Health

The first-ever Global Summit for Eye Health, to be hosted by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda in **November 2026**, represents a landmark global moment for eye health. Building on the WHO Resolution on **Integrated People-Centred Eye Care (IPEC)** and the UN Resolution on Vision, the Summit will convene Heads of Government, Ministers, multilateral agencies, development banks, industry, and civil society.

The Summit aims to strengthen national action, unlock sustainable financing, and establish a global accountability framework for eye health. It positions eye health as a whole-of-life and whole-of-government priority that supports **Universal Health Coverage (UHC)**, strengthens responses to non-communicable diseases (NCDs), improves education and workforce productivity, and advances equity and inclusion.

Zambia's Context

Zambia has demonstrated consistent progress in eye health over the past decade, underpinned by strong data, active civil society engagement, and increasing integration of eye care within the health system.

Key features of Zambia's eye health context include:

- **Robust national eye health data**, generated through multiple population-based eye health surveys and Rapid Assessment of Avoidable Blindness (RAAB) studies over the past decade, providing a strong evidence base for planning and prioritisation.
- A well-established **Eye Health Consortium Group**, comprising eye health NGOs operating in the country, which meets quarterly and provides coordinated technical input and support to the Ministry of Health.
- Progressive rollout of **Primary Eye Care (PEC)** across several regions, strengthening access to basic eye services at community and primary health facility levels.
- Strong collaboration between government, civil society, and implementing partners, supporting alignment between policy, service delivery, and data use.

Together, these elements position Zambia as a country with practical experience in translating evidence into service delivery and system strengthening.

Why the Global Summit for Eye Health Is Important for Zambia

The 2026 Global Summit for Eye Health offers Zambia a strategic opportunity to consolidate progress, elevate national priorities, and demonstrate leadership at regional and global levels.

Engagement in the Summit would enable Zambia to:

- Showcase how **RAABs and national eye health surveys** have been used to inform equitable planning and service expansion.
- Highlight experience in **scaling Primary Eye Care** within broader primary health care reforms.
- Formalise and publicly signal government-led commitments that align with existing strategies and investments.
- Strengthen Zambia's visibility and voice within global eye health policy and accountability discussions.

Participation in the Summit does not represent a new policy direction. Rather, it provides a platform to recognise and strengthen Zambia's existing efforts through clear, time-bound commitments grounded in national systems.

Characteristics of Potential Commitments

In discussion with the National Department of Health and partners, potential commitments may be explored that are:

- **New or scaled**, building on existing initiatives rather than restating current policy
 - **Specific, measurable, and time-bound**, with clear accountability
 - **Aligned with Zambia's health sector priorities**, including UHC and primary health care
 - **Grounded in strong national data**, including RAABs and routine reporting
 - **Supportive of PEC rollout and quality improvement**
 - **Aligned with global frameworks**, including WHO IPEC, the World Report on Vision, and Global Summit accelerators
 - **Feasible and cost-aware**, drawing where possible on existing budgets and partner-supported platforms
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Pathway to Exploring Government Commitments

The proposed approach follows established government decision-making pathways, progressing from technical engagement to senior endorsement and public signalling. The process is structured across five phases. Each phase should include:

- Consultation with relevant NDOH departments
- Engagement with the Eye Health Consortium Group
- Periodic check-ins with the IAPB Africa regional team
- Simple tracking of consultations, decisions, and milestones

Phase 1: Engagement and Scoping

Indicative timing: February – March 2026

Objectives

- Explore alignment between potential commitment areas and NDOH priorities
- Introduce the Global Summit and commitment concept informally
- Identify potential government champions

Indicative activities

- Technical briefings drawing on RAABs and national survey data
 - Initial discussions through the Eye Health Consortium Group
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Phase 2: Cross-Sector Alignment and Initial Consultation

Indicative timing: April – May 2026

Objectives

- Translate priority areas into draft commitment concepts
- Encourage cross-programme input (e.g. primary health care, NCDs, data and monitoring)
- Begin informal feasibility and resourcing considerations

Indicative activities

- Refinement of draft commitment language
 - Alignment with national strategies and WHO reporting frameworks
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Phase 3: Commitment Shaping and Senior Engagement

Indicative timing: June – September 2026

Objectives

- Refine commitments with senior leadership input
- Prepare Zambia's narrative and positioning for global audiences

Indicative activities

- Clarification of implementation pathways and responsibilities
 - Preparation of draft public-facing commitment statements
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Phase 4: Submission and Preparation

Indicative timing: By World Sight Day (October 2026)

Objectives

- Register commitments in the Global Summit tracking mechanism
 - Support announcement planning and communications
 - Prepare for post-announcement follow-up
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Phase 5: Announcement and Implementation

Indicative timing: Post-announcement

Objectives

- Support implementation, monitoring, and reporting
 - Enable recognition, peer learning, and accountability
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Messaging and Positioning Considerations

Messaging throughout the process may emphasise that the Global Summit for Eye Health is a **recognition and leadership opportunity**, not an external policy request.

Indicative messaging themes include:

- Zambia as a **data-informed decision-maker** in eye health
- Effective collaboration between government and civil society through the Eye Health Consortium Group
- Primary Eye Care as a foundation for equitable access and UHC
- Zambia's contribution to regional learning and global accountability

Messaging should be refined iteratively and aligned with senior government priorities.

Illustrative Areas for Potential Commitments

The areas below are indicative and intended to support discussion. Final decisions rest with the Government of Zambia.

- **Monitoring and accountability** (anchor area)
- **Scaling and quality strengthening of Primary Eye Care**

- **Integration of eye health within primary health care and NCD platforms**
 - **Partnership and coordinated delivery through civil society engagement**
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Illustrative Commitment Examples

These examples are provided to support discussion and refinement. They are not intended as final proposals.

1. Monitoring and Accountability (Flagship Example)

From 2027 onwards, Zambia could commit to using RAAB and routine eye health data to track effective cataract surgical coverage (eCSC) and effective refractive error coverage (eREC), supporting evidence-based planning and equitable service delivery.

Rationale

- Builds on Zambia's strong history of RAABs and eye health surveys
- Strengthens accountability and data use
- Aligns with WHO 2030 eye health targets and Global Summit accelerators

2. Strengthening and Scaling Primary Eye Care

By 2029, Zambia could further scale and standardise Primary Eye Care across regions, strengthening referral pathways, supervision, and quality assurance within the primary health care system.

Rationale

- Builds on existing PEC rollout
- Improves early detection and continuity of care
- Supports UHC and equity goals

3. Partnership and Coordinated Delivery

Zambia could formalise mechanisms for structured engagement between NDOH and the Eye Health Consortium Group to support coordinated implementation, monitoring, and shared learning.

Rationale

- Reflects Zambia's strong NGO coordination model
 - Enhances efficiency and alignment
 - Requires limited new policy change
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Supporting Policy Frameworks and Evidence Base

This process will be supported by:

- The Global Summit for Eye Health Policy Framework and accelerator areas
- WHO Integrated People-Centred Eye Care guidance
- Zambia's RAABs, national eye health surveys, and routine data systems
- National health sector and primary health care strategies

Together, these provide a robust evidence base for feasible and high-impact commitments.

Looking Ahead

The 2026 Global Summit for Eye Health offers Zambia a strategic opportunity to consolidate progress, elevate national priorities, and demonstrate leadership grounded in data, partnership, and primary care. Through a structured and consultative process, Zambia can articulate clear, credible commitments that deliver national impact while contributing to global accountability and progress in eye health.