



2026 Global Summit for Eye Health

Vietnam Country Guidance and Strategy to Secure Government Commitments

Overview of the Summit

The first ever Global Summit for Eye Health, to be hosted by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda on November 2nd 2026, represents a landmark moment for eye health. Building on the WHO Resolution on Integrated People-Centred Eye Care and on the UN Resolution on Vision, the Summit will bring together Heads of Government, Ministers, multilateral agencies, development banks, industry, and civil society to strengthen national action, unlock financing, and establish a global accountability framework for eye health. The Summit will also embed eye health within broader health, economic and social development agendas, recognising its role as a whole-of-life, whole-of-government priority that underpins Universal Health Coverage, supports healthy ageing, strengthens the NCD response, enhances education and workforce productivity, and enables full social and economic participation.

Viet Nam's Context

Viet Nam's progress in eye health has been widely recognised across the Western Pacific Region and globally. Over the past decade, the country has emerged as a regional leader in integrated, people-centred eye care, underpinned by strong political commitment and effective health-system action.

Viet Nam has significantly expanded cataract surgical services nationwide, improving access for millions of people, reducing surgical backlogs, and strengthening service capacity across provinces. These efforts have contributed to substantial gains in coverage and outcomes, particularly for older adults and underserved populations, and demonstrate sustained investment in avoidable blindness as a public-health priority.

At the same time, Viet Nam has shown exceptional leadership in optometry workforce development. Through the establishment and scale-up of high-quality optometry education and training programmes, the country has strengthened primary eye-care capacity and created a model that is increasingly referenced by neighbouring countries seeking to expand their own eye-care workforce. This focus on workforce

development has been central to advancing more integrated, people-centred models of care.

Viet Nam has also achieved the elimination of trachoma as a public-health problem, reflecting long-term government leadership, effective coordination across sectors, and strong collaboration with communities and development partners. This milestone underscores the country's ability to translate global targets into sustained national action.

In addition, Viet Nam has pioneered innovative approaches to preventing eye injuries linked to road-traffic trauma, positioning eye health within broader road-safety and injury-prevention agendas. By explicitly linking eye health policy with transport safety and trauma care, Viet Nam has demonstrated a forward-looking, multisectoral approach that is of growing interest internationally.

Together, these achievements position Viet Nam as a regional exemplar in integrated, people-centred eye care and highlight the country's strong foundation for contributing leadership, experience, and practical lessons to regional and global dialogue through the 2026 Global Summit for Eye Health.

Why Viet Nam's Engagement in the Summit Matters

These accomplishments position Viet Nam as a regional and global exemplar in integrated, people-centred eye care. They also highlight the country's potential to contribute meaningfully to global dialogue during the 2026 Global Summit on Eye Health.

The 2026 Global Summit for Eye Health provides an opportunity for Viet Nam to:

- Showcase national progress on cataract services, workforce development, and the elimination of trachoma.
- Highlight pioneering approaches to the measurement of refractive error, including population-level data, service coverage, and quality metrics of growing international relevance.
- Strengthen regional partnerships, particularly across ASEAN and the Western Pacific Region.
- Demonstrate commitment to UHC, primary health care, and WHO's Integrated People-Centred Eye Care (IPEC) framework.
- Shape global policy and accountability mechanisms, including future monitoring frameworks on coverage, quality, and workforce.

In this context, the 2026 Global Summit for Eye Health does not represent a new direction for Viet Nam. Rather, it provides a platform to formalise, elevate, and internationally recognise Viet Nam's leadership translating established practice into clear, time-bound, **government-led commitments** that can be tracked, shared, and scaled across the Pacific and globally.

What Makes a Strong Viet Nam Commitment

A strong Viet Nam commitment should:

- Be **new** (formalising or scaling existing practice rather than restating it)
- Be **SMART** (clear scope, timeline, and accountability)
- Be **cross-government** (Ministry of Health, other relevant ministries, research institutions)
- Be **capacity-assessed** (Grounded in existing systems, workforce, and delivery capacity)
- Be **aligned with at least one of six accelerator interventions** from the Value of Vision Report (Early detection, giving out reading glasses, increasing workforce capacity, boosting surgical productivity, removing barriers to access, and making cataract surgery better)
- Be **aligned with national plans** (Builds on current Ministry of Health systems and strategies)
- Have **international alignment** (SDGs, WHO eye health targets, UNGA Vision for Everyone)
- Be **financed/feasible** (Supported by existing budgets or clearly costed and deliverable)

Pathway to Government Commitment

Engagement should follow established government decision-making pathways, moving from technical validation to political endorsement, while framing the Global Summit as a recognition and leadership opportunity, not an external policy ask. The approach is structured across four phases, moving from early alignment to formal commitment, registration, and follow-up.

Phase 1: Technical Alignment & Scoping

Timing: February

Objectives

- Socialise the concept of a Global Summit-aligned commitment without formal asks
- Validate alignment of proposed commitment areas with Ministry of Health priorities
- Identify internal government champions within eye health and data teams

Indicative in-person consultation: Tuesday, 10th February

Phase 2: Commitment Shaping & Cross-Government Alignment

Timing: March – April

Objectives

- Translate validated activities into SMART, new commitments
- Encourage cross-government input where relevant (planning, education, etc.)
- Begin informal costing and capacity assessment

Key activities

- Develop and refine draft commitment language
- Align commitments with national policies, WHO reporting requirements, and Global Summit accelerators

Indicative in-person consultation: TBC

Phase 3: Political Endorsement & Pre-Registration

Timing: May – September

Objectives

- Secure senior-level endorsement at Director-General or Ministerial level
- Finalise commitment language for tracker submission
- Prepare the country's Summit narrative and positioning

Key activities

- Confirm financing or resource implications
- Agree on level of representation, messaging, and regional leadership framing

Indicative in-person consultation: TBC

Phase 4: Registration, Announcement & Follow-Up

Timing: By World Sight Day – 8 October 2026

Objectives

- Register commitments in the Global Summit for Eye Health 2026 tracker
- Support the country's public announcement at or ahead of the Summit
- Plan post-Summit recognition and implementation support

Potential Areas for Government Commitments

The areas outlined below are intended to illustrate possible pathways for national commitment that align with Viet Nam's priorities, existing strengths, and the Global Summit for Eye Health Policy Framework. They are indicative rather than prescriptive and are provided to support discussion and refinement with government counterparts. Final commitments would be determined by the Government of Viet Nam based on national priorities, feasibility, and implementation considerations.

1. **Improving the Quality and Reach of Cataract Surgery**
Strengthening surgical quality, outcome monitoring, referral pathways, and equitable access across provinces.
2. **Strengthening Refractive Error and Spectacle Services**
Expanding access to affordable, high-quality spectacles through primary care, school health programmes, and strengthened supply chains.
3. **Advancing Diabetic Eye Disease Prevention and Care**
Integrating retinal screening and referral into diabetes and NCD services, supported by workforce training and appropriate technology.
4. **Showcasing Leadership in the Measurement of Refractive Error**
Demonstrating pioneering approaches to measuring refractive error burden, service coverage, and outcomes, and contributing to the development of regional and global metrics for refractive error and vision correction.
5. **Integrating Eye Health into UHC and Primary Health Care**
Embedding essential eye-care services within public financing and primary care delivery platforms.
6. **Enhancing Data, Monitoring, and Accountability**
Strengthening national eye-health data systems and contributing to regional and global monitoring frameworks.

Supporting Policy Frameworks and Evidence Base

Enclosed are the Global Summit policy framework and proposed areas of action for the Summit, as well as the Case for Investing in Eye Health in Viet Nam. The Policy Framework was launched at the World Health Assembly in Geneva in May, and the Case for Investing in Eye Health was launched at the United Nations General Assembly in New York in September. The latter demonstrates that **investing \$73.2 million USD in eye health in Viet Nam over the next five years will deliver \$1.64 billion USD in economic benefits** as well as significant social returns, including reduced vision-related disability, improved workforce participation, fewer diabetes-related complications, and stronger health-system resilience. The Case for Investing in Eye Health also outlines and operationalises the Summit's six accelerator interventions, translating them into priority investment areas with demonstrated economic and social returns. Together, these documents outline the evidence base and areas of potential alignment with Viet Nam's health and development priorities, including opportunities for impact through measurable and cost-effective interventions.

Looking Ahead

The 2026 Global Summit for Eye Health provides Viet Nam with a timely opportunity to consolidate its achievements, articulate national priorities, and reinforce its role as a regional leader in eye health. By aligning existing strengths with clear and feasible government-led commitments, Viet Nam can both advance equitable eye care for its own population and continue to contribute meaningfully to progress across the Pacific and the global eye-health agenda.