The St. John's Global Compact for Eye Health

GLOBAL SUMMIT FOR EYE HEALTH
Antigua and Barbuda 2026

Host

Government of Antigua and Barbuda

People's Republic of Bangladesh

Co-operative Republic of Guyana

Co-Hosts

Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Federal Republic of Nigeria

Technical Collaborator

World Health Organization

Lead Co-ordinator

IAPB

The 1 Billion Pledge: St John's Global Compact for Eye Health

We commit to address the global challenge of avoidable vision impairment through collective action to ensure that everyone, everywhere, can access the eye care they need.

Why Eye Health Matters

Almost everyone, everywhere, will be affected by an eye condition in their lifetime. Despite being a universal challenge, eye health is frequently underprioritized, and underfunded.

Globally, at least 2 billion people around the world are living with vision impairment or blindness, of whom 1.1 billion have a vision impairment that could have been prevented or is yet to be addressed. This is more than a public health challenge – it is an enormous barrier to global prosperity and sustainable development.

Eye health sits directly at the intersection of health, development, and economic productivity. Evidence shows that every $1 invested in eye health can yield up to a $28 return.[1][2][3] If action was taken to reach the 1.1 billion people living with unaddressed vision impairment, the boost to the world economy would be $447 billion annually. It would result in 22 million more people employed and the equivalent of 13 million more years of learning in schools every year.

A Shared Commitment to Advance Eye Health

Convened under the leadership of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, in partnership with the Governments of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Ireland and the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, the 2026 Global Summit for Eye Health marks a critical opportunity for countries and key stakeholders to translate existing commitments into action. Building on resolution WHA73.4 on integrated people-centred eye care, the global eye health targets endorsed in WHA74.12, and United Nations General Assembly resolution 75/310, Vision for Everyone, the Summit will focus on expanding access to eye care, mobilizing sustainable investment, and scaling proven solutions to reach the 1.1 billion people without access to the services they need by 2030.

Governments commit to working towards ensuring equitable access to eye care services for their populations, including mobilization of the necessary resources and support. We will adopt whole-of-government approach, building synergies with other development priorities, and embedding eye care across national systems, with a particular focus on people-centered care and primary health care integration. We will prioritize the integration of eye care within Universal Health Coverage packages, social health insurance schemes, and domestic health budgets.

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[1] Wong B, Hennessy J, Stern J, et al., The Value of Vision: The case for investing in eye health, pg.21, Seva Foundation, The Fred Hollows Foundation, and IAPB, 2025, https://visionatlas.iapb.org/

[2] Wong B, Singh K, Everett B, et al. The case for investment in eye health: systematic review and economic modelling analysis. Bull World Health Organ. 2023;101(12):786-799. doi:10.2471/BLT.23.289863 20.

[3] Lomborg B. Save 4.2 million lives and generate $2.1 trillion in total benefits for only $41 billion: Introduction to the Special Issue on the Most Efficient Policies for the Sustainable Development Goals. Journal of Benefit-Cost Analysis. 2023;14, S1(S1):1-15. doi:doi:10.1017/bca.2023.3

Donors, Development Agencies and International Financial Institutions commit to support country-led, system-wide approaches by aligning technical assistance and financing with national plans and commitments. This includes mobilizing and allocating adequate, predictable and sustained resources, especially in low- and middle-income countries, including international cooperation and official development assistance. We will support catalytic financing mechanisms, including existing multilateral initiatives, such as the World Bank's Eye Health Trust Fund within the Health Transformation and Resilience Multi-Donor Trust Fund, to advance action at all levels.

Private Sector Businesses commit to driving sustainable, scalable solutions by expanding equitable access to affordable, quality products and services and advancing eye health through their operations and social impact initiatives, while actively investing in innovation, research, and technology. This includes partnering across sectors, including with governments, to support long-term system strengthening, supporting eye health among employees and the communities they serve, investing in local workforce capacity, and building resilient, diversified supply chains and fostering market development.

Civil Society Organizations commit to advancing equitable access, raising awareness and demand, sharing knowledge and empowering people and communities to respond to their eye care needs. This includes partnering with governments, communities, and other stakeholders to support strengthening eye care within health systems and advocating for inclusive policies, reducing stigma, and ensuring that commitments are informed by lived experience and are responsive to the needs of those most affected.

Research and Academic Institutions commit to generating and translating evidence to inform policy and practice. This includes supporting health systems, policy and implementation research; advancing common definitions, standards, and interoperability for data and technology; tracking progress against national and global targets; and promoting knowledge sharing and the uptake of innovation across sectors, aligned with national priorities, to ensure that decisions are evidence-based and outcomes are measurable.

Professional Bodies and Medical Providers commit to advancing equitable, high quality, people-centered eye care through leadership and professional collaboration. This includes strengthening workforce capacity and competency-based training, supporting the delivery of safe and effective services, promoting quality standards and accountability, contributing data and evidence to inform policy and planning, and working with national partners to expand equitable access to eye care.

Driving Accountability and Delivering Results

We recognize the strong foundation of intergovernmental commitments that call for the integration of eye health into global development and national systems1 and applaud initiatives such as WHO SPECS 2030 and the global initiative to eliminate cataract related blindness and visual impairment that focus on building sustainable eye care services to address the major causes of vision impairment and blindness. We encourage the continued integration of eye health into relevant UN processes, recognizing it as a cross-cutting enabler of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and call

upon United Nations agencies to provide leadership and support the goals of this compact within their respective mandates.

We welcome the establishment of the joint World Health Organization (WHO) and International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) hosted Commitment Portal as the centralized, open-access architecture to ensure visibility, transparency, and tracking of all commitments. We support the establishment of the 'Report Once, Count Twice' mechanism for governments, which encourages timely reporting through existing mechanisms, such as the Voluntary National Reviews and the global eye health targets of resolution WHA74.12, which will be integrated into the portal.

We encourage the United Nations Secretary-General, in collaboration with the World Health Organization, to continue supporting implementation of resolution 75/310, including, as appropriate, briefing the General Assembly, to sustain momentum, strengthen global visibility, and ensure that commitments translate into measurable outcomes through 2030 and beyond.

Join the 1 Billion Pledge. Together, we can eliminate avoidable vision loss and unlock human potential worldwide.

Endorsments

Country Governments (41):
Antigua and Barbuda, Commonwealth of Australia, People's Republic of Bangladesh, Kingdom of Bhutan, Kingdom of Cambodia, Republic of Ethiopia, Republic of Cameroon, Republic of Chad, Co-operative Republic of Guyana, Republic of Kenya, Republic of Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Kingdom of Lesotho, Republic of Maldives, Republic of Malta, Islamic Republic of Mauritania, Republic of Mozambique, Nepal, New Zealand, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Republic of Rwanda, Republic of Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, Togolese Republic, Republic of Uganda, Republic of Zambia, Commonwealth of the Cook Islands, Federal Republic of Germany, Grenada, State of Madhya Pradesh (Republic of India), United Mexican States, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Independent State of Papua New Guinea, Republic of Peru, Federal Republic of Somalia, Republic of South Africa, Republic of South Sudan, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, United Republic of Tanzania, Republic of Zimbabwe.

Donor Organizations, Development Agencies and International Financial Institutions (7)
ATscale, the Global Partnership for Assistive Technology, Ann & Carl Evans Foundation
The Chen Yet-Sen Family Foundation, Vision Action Fund, Vision Catalyst Fund, Vision Friend Sakib Gore, UNICEF

Private Sector Businesses (14)
Alcon Vision, LLC, Arclight Project, University of St Andrews, Bawa optical services, CooperVision, DEEPAK Care Ltd., Ennovation Pte Ltd, EssilorLuxottica, He Eye Specialist Hospital Group, PlenOptika, Santen, SRC Vision Consulting LTD, Trinidad Eye Hospital, Vision Plus Eye Clinic – Tanzania, ZEISS Vision Care

Civil Society Organizations (84)
20/20 Quest, Aravind Eye Care System, Asociación Civil Divino Niño Jesús (ADINIJ), Asociación para evitar la ceguera en Mexico, BCVI Belize Council for the Visually Impaired, BP Eye Foundation, Caribbean Optometrist Association, CBM Christoffel-Blindenmission Christian Blind Mission e.V., CBM Global Disability Inclusion, Charity Vision Somalia, CharityVision International, Combat Blindness international, Commonwealth Pharmacists Association, Cure Blindness, Cure Blindness Project, Dr. K. Zaman BNSB Eye Hospital, Eye Care Foundation, Eye Foundation Of America, EyeSHA, Fighting Blindness Canada, Fred Hollows Foundation New Zealand, Fundació Privada Ulls del món (Eyes of the world Foundation), Fundación Ver Bien para Aprender Mejor, Fundación Visión, Global Vision 2020
GoodVision- Burkina Faso, GX Foundation, Heart to Heart foundation, Helen Keller Intl, Help Me See, Inc., IAPB, India Vision Institute, Instituto de Oftalmología Fundación Conde de Valenciana, KeraLink International, Kilimanjaro Centre for Community Ophthalmology, L V Prasad Eye Institute, Light for the World, Lions Sight First Eye Hospital, Magrabi Foundation, Medical Researach Foundation - Sankara Nethralaya, Mission for Vision, National Committee for Sight Preservation Foundation Inc, NCD Alliance, Nepal Eye Hospital, Nepal Netra Jyoti Sangh, Noor Dubai foundation, OneSight EssilorLuxottica Foundation, OPC (Organisation pour la Prevention de la Cecite), Optometry Confederation of India, Optometry Giving Sight, Orbis International, Peek Vision, Prevent Blindness, Rahat Samarpan Seva, Samiti, RestoringVision, Sankara Eye Foundation, India, SEE International, Seva Canada, Seva Foundation, Shri Sadguru Seva Sangh Trust (Sadguru Netra Chikitsalaya), Sight Aid for Africa Foundation
Sight For All, Sight Relief SCIO, Sightsavers, Singapore National Eye Centre, South African National Council for the Blind, Swiss Red Cross, TanZanEye e.V., Tarabai Desai Eye Hospital, The Brenda Strafford Foundation, The Enduvision Foundation, The Fred Hollows Foundation, The Ophthalmology Foundation, Tulsi Eye Hospital, VIA Diabetes, Vision And Road Safety (VARS) Coalition, , VisionGram Optics Africa, VisionSpring, Vital Strategies, VOSH/International, World Association of Eye Hospitals, World Blind Union, World Society of Paediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus, Zimbabwe Council for the Blind

Research and Academic Institutions (6)
College of Ophthalmology and Allied Vision Sciences, School of Optometry and Vision Science, UNSW Sydney, The University of the West Indies (UWI) St Augustine Campus Trinidad and Tobago, Jerome Jacobson Global Program at the Kellogg Eye Center, University of Michigan, Flaum Eye Institute, University of Rochester Medical Center, Sindh Institute of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences

Professional Bodies and Medical Providers (20)
Administración del Patrimonio de la Beneficencia Pública (APBP), ASEAN Ophthalmology Society, Associação de Profissionais Licenciados de Optometria, Association of Community Ophthalomolosts of Sri Lanka, Colegio Federación Colombiana de Optómetras (Fedopto), Department of Ophthalmology ,Teaching Hospital Jaffna,Sri Lanka, European Society of Cataract and, Refractive Surgeons, Instituto Nacional de Oftalmología-"Dr. Francisco Contreras Campos"-Perú, International Council of OphthalmologyInternational Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology, Ispahani Islamia Eye Institute & Hospital, Nepal Ophthalmic Society (NOS), RANZCO, Royal College of Ophthalmologists, Shanghai Eye Hospital, St John Eye Hospital Group, The College of Optometrists, Vision 2020 : the Right to Sight, India, Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada, World Council of Optometry