

## Eye care capacity building in low- and middle-income countries

MISSING BILLION

<b>Geography and scale:</b>	Worldwide; focus on sub-Saharan Africa	<b>Involved actors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Light for the World</li> <li>• University Hospitals in Jimma and Gondar, Ethiopia</li> <li>• Ministry of Health, Uganda</li> <li>• Ministry of Foreign trade and Development Co-operation, Netherlands</li> </ul>
<b>Type of Disability</b>	Visual impairment		

### Best practice description

To meet the aim of WHO's and the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness VISION 2020 global initiative to eliminate avoidable blindness, Light for the World with partners have offered cataract operations, distribute medication, train ophthalmologists, build and support hospitals, and provide mobile services that offer eye care in remote areas of low- and middle-income countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Through this program, they set up several residency, optometry, ophthalmic technician, and eye care nursing programs to increase the number of eye-care workers domestically across sub-Saharan Africa. This has also created enough staff for mobile teams to support remote communities.

### Origin/impetus for best practice

Over 2 billion people in the world have lost all or some of their sight. At least 1 billion of them have a visual impairment that could have been prevented or treated. Loss of sight severely affects their participation in daily life, e.g. not being able to attend school or work.

### Impact / results of implementing best practice

- 63 doctors are pursuing ophthalmology studies in African countries.
- Increase number of eye care staff through two residency programs at Univ. hospitals in Jimma and Gondar.
- 50 students were trained in clinical optometry, and nurses start with ophthalmology or further training.
- Eye clinic of Arba Minch has mobile teams that travel to remote areas.
- Burkina Faso established the country's first national ophthalmology training program in the capital city.
- Mozambique supported the training of ophthalmic technicians and ophthalmologists.
- Partnership with the Ugandan Ministry of Health in the National Intervention on Uncorrected Refractive Errors project.

### Critical success factors for best practice

- Successful coordination and engagement with multiple governments and stakeholders.
- Sustainable approach to providing services and increasing capacity.
- Mixed approaches (formal education, training, mobile teams) to have a large impact.

### Impact statement

"We strive for effective solutions and high quality. We focus on sustainable and systematic changes, but at the same time also on direct impact and better living conditions for people with disabilities. Our first projects were focused on eye-care and inclusive education...Over the years, the breadth and diversity of the work have grown, and we direct more attention to the rights of persons with disabilities and the importance of inclusive societies."

### Lessons learned

- Importance of collaborative effort.
- Sustainable approach is necessary for long-term success.

<b>Sources</b>	<a href="#">Light for the World</a>	<b>Further links &amp; information</b>	<a href="#">Light for the World Annual Report</a>
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