

Prevention of Blindness and Deafness News

Universal access to eye health: a global action plan, 2014-2019 prepared for the WHO Executive Board (EB) in January 2013

Further intensive work continued on the development of the draft action plan. After publishing the zero draft action plan on the WHO website in August 2012, comments were received through a web-based consultation and an informal consultation on 8 October 2012. Member States, UN entities and international partners were all invited to the informal consultation.

At the 8 October meeting participants asked the Secretariat to arrange a follow-up consultation to discuss further global targets and selected indicators for the action plan. This was held on 31 October. The draft action plan is now on the WHO EB website in preparation for discussion at the EB meeting. http://apps.who.int/gb/ebw/ha/pdf_files/EB132/B132_9-en.pdf

Taking forward prevention of blindness at the national level...

Costa Rica, 18-19 October: Low Vision workshop to assess current situation and to make recommendations on LV services development.

Colombia, 26-27 October: Elaboration of the National Strategy on Low Vision in a workshop hosted by the Ministry of Health of Colombia and supported by CBM.

Oman, 2-8 November: Following the request from the MOH a technical consultation mission was undertaken to review the status of blinding trachoma, to review the post-endemic surveillance data, to carry on a field visit to verify the current situation of trachoma control at the PHC level in two formerly hyper-endemic regions. Additionally, it was possible to observe and discuss emerging issues relevant to the national eye care system.

Honduras, 6-8 November: Development of the VISION 2020 National Strategy.

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Morocco, 7-10 January 2013: National Workshop for the elaboration of a national strategy against chronic glaucoma, organized by the Ministry of Health.

Working in partnership ...

China, 14-16 October: World ROP Congress III in Shanghai / China. The purpose of this meeting was to provide a forum for ophthalmologists, neonatologists and neonatal nurses from around the world to share knowledge and experiences about ROP.

Colombia, 2 October: Planning meeting with the Chair of the neonatology department and five staff members of the FIOCRUZ WHO Collaborating Centre on ROP to plan activities for the coming years.

Australia, 24-28 November: Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists 44th Annual Scientific Congress.

China: 11-12 December: A preliminary meeting was organized under the Lions/SightFirst China Action project phase III, "to work together towards the elimination of Blinding trachoma in China by 2016" has an op-ed from the Dr Shin Young-Soo, Regional Director of WHO's Western Pacific office, highlighted in China Daily, China's effort to eliminate trachoma, and the Lions Clubs International/WHO/PRC partnership:

http://europe.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2012-12/11/content_16004680.htm

Panama, 3-8 December: RAAB training program for facilitators. Supported by IAPB and ORBIS.

Solomon Islands, 4-5 December: First Solomon Islands National Trachoma Stakeholders Meeting. Over 60 delegates from various government sectors and eye health nurses from around the country met to review new trachoma prevalence data and plan for the implementation of the SAFE strategy for trachoma control and elimination, supported by IAPB and WHO.

Guyana, 10-13 December: Annual Caribbean regional meeting for National VISION 2020 Committees. Supported by CCB-SSI and EC.

An update on the 18th session of the Joint Action Forum of APOC will follow in the next newsletter.

Forthcoming events...

Elaboration of the first draft of the AMRO Regional Plan of Action 2014-2019 aligned with the global action plan, 2014-2019 - Universal access to eye health.

Prevention of Deafness

Over the last 18 months, WHO has been developing new estimates on the magnitude of disabling hearing loss. These will be published on 3 March 2013 on the International Day for Ear and Hearing Care.

A lunchtime seminar was held at WHO headquarters on 'living with deafness in middle- and low-income countries: options and challenges.' Speakers were: Mr Colin Allen, *President of World Federation of the Deaf*, who delivered a speech on 'living with deafness.' It was delivered in sign language and translated into English; Ms Sally Harvest, *CBM*, who spoke on 'living with hearing loss.' The seminar was attended by staff across WHO. More information and video links here: <http://www.who.int/pbd/deafness/news/en/>



Taking forward prevention of deafness at the national level...

Guinea-Conakry, 6-9 December: Workshop for developing a national programme for ear and hearing care. The workshop brought together key stakeholders including the MOH, professionals and disabled peoples' organizations to discuss the formulation of the national strategy for promotion of ear and hearing care in the country. Dr Zitsamele



Dr Zitsamele Cuddy, WHO Representative to Guinea along-with Dr Moussa Kone from the Country office, Dr Boureima Sambo from AFRO and Dr Shelly Chadha from HQ participated. The delegation met with the Minister of Health, Deputy Speaker of Parliament and other political leaders. A draft national plan for the prevention of hearing loss has been prepared and is being finalized.

Working in partnership ...

Promoting ear and hearing care through community-based rehabilitation (CBR): A document describing ear and hearing care and CBR has been developed by WHO. This was undertaken in partnership with a number of international experts, including

CBM, World Federation of the Deaf and International Federation of the Hard of Hearing.

The document was launched at the 1st CBR World Congress in Agra on 26 November 2012.

The document can be accessed online at <http://www.who.int/pbd/deafness/news/CBREarHearingCare.pdf>

Forthcoming meetings...

Geneva, March 2013: Ad hoc consultation for improving access to hearing aid services through technology transfer.

Beijing, China, April 2013: Meeting of WHO collaborating centres.

Seoul, South Korea, June 2013: IFOS ENT World Congress. WHO will host a symposium on primary ear and hearing care. This symposium will be accompanied by a poster competition jointly run by WHO and Sound Hearing 2030 on the theme 'Raising awareness regarding ear and hearing care within communities.' Details can be found at <http://www.who.int/pbd/deafness/news/posters/en/index.html>

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