



A call to action



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Eye Care in Africa

- Preventable and treatable visual impairments affect an estimated 285 million people worldwide, with the **low- and middle-income** groups being the most affected (87%).
- In Africa, it is estimated that 32 700 per million individuals are visually impaired. The different eye disorders contributing to visual impairment include cataract, glaucoma, trachoma and refractive error – and nearly 80% of impairments are preventable or treatable.
- With an ageing population and the lack of cohesive plans to address the impact of visual impairment on people's productivity and quality of life, there will likely be increase the burden of eye disease in many African countries.



Glaucoma in Africa

- Of the causes of world blindness, glaucoma is the leading cause after cataracts. It is a devastating and neglected infliction.
- In Africa, most of the glaucoma is primary chronic open angle glaucoma. Its prevalence has been conservatively estimated to be 10, 000 people for every 1 million in population.
- Despite the disease's high incidence and prevalence, it is only recently that Africa is recognizing glaucoma as a priority eye disease.



Size of the problem

- Glaucoma is responsible for up to 30% of blindness in the world, and research suggests it is affecting Africans at an unparalleled scale, rapidly. Research also suggests that approximately 90% of African patients with glaucoma are unaware they are inflicted.
- Due to urbanization, trained eye care providers are found in urban centers, and the majority of the population lives in rural areas.
- There is a serious shortage of trained eye care providers in the continent. Even with 24% of the global burden of eye disease being found in Africa, Africa has less than 1% of all ophthalmologists (over 200 000).
- Lack of public awareness/education about the disease.



A Call to Action in Africa

- Glaucoma should be prioritized in the Vision 2020 programs.
- Educating the population will be essential to raise awareness, like glaucoma awareness month.
- Providing clinical and surgical training opportunities for African ophthalmologists.
- We need our international colleagues to assist mother Africa with their expertise, time and funding.



Legacy Project

Create a lasting legacy after the World Ophthalmology Congress® 2020 to address the challenges on the African continent.

- Lack of awareness and education of eye healthcare and causes of avoidable blindness and solutions.
- Inadequate facilities and funding
- Lack of partnerships with key stakeholders
- Access to remote and rural areas
- Lack of skills development and transfer

The legacy project must be sustainable and seek to address these challenges on a **long-term basis**.



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Legacy Project

- After WOC2020 has concluded, the plan is to have Legacy Projects that will be adopted by all 54 states of Africa.
- These projects are designed to elicit a positive reaction and help address eye care problems facing the continent and will still be part of our overarching theme, “All eyes on Africa.
- This legacy project will be run by the **AOC** and will be driven from the AOC website with the OSSA and MEACO websites acting as support.
- We aim to create sustainable service delivery to our people for years to come in the eye care society.



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Legacy Project

TACTICS: Utilize minimal and tactical digital platforms that are cost effective for top of mind awareness and driving conversations.



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Mobile Clinics /



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Mobile Clinics

- We recommend a mobile clinic staffed by a volunteer ophthalmologist and a nurse, which will move around the country focusing on the **poorest** and most **inaccessible rural communities**.
- With the support & partnership of the World Glaucoma Association (WGA) in partnership with the African Ophthalmology Council (AOC), the South African National Health Department, and other NGOs we can assess community eye care needs, with special emphasis on regions with the most need.
- The health teams can be deployed in different communities and schools, etc.
- We have many NGOs that is currently making an essential contribution to the public health systems, from a national level, through provincial and local, to their role in individual communities.



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Mobile Clinics

- Therefore our health teams would be better able to consult those patients with eye problems. After diagnosing them, the doctor would refer them to the nearest centre for free follow-up treatment.
- We recommend community radio stations to advertise the times and places where the public can find these mobile clinics. The van can also serve as a mobile eye education centre, e.g. dispensing flyers at clinics during Eye Care Week.



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WGA

- AOC appreciate the effort of WGA of starting the glaucoma fellowship
- Thank you to the executive of WGA for increasing the number of fellowship candidates.
- Next step is to see the those candidates forming an African Glaucoma society.

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