

Africa - Profile

Palesa Dube, Deputy Director, ICEE Africa

Africa bears the burden of the world's blindness with rates up to seven times higher than those in the developed world. Approximately, 90% of the world's blind people live in either Africa or Asia.

Africa suffers from a severe lack of human resources. The estimated population of Sub-Saharan Africa is 620 million. The table below compares the number of optometrists as a comparison to total population.

Country	Population (million)	Optometrists	Optoms in the Public Sector
Zimbabwe	18 m	26	0
Togo	1.4 m	1	0
Ethiopia	73 m	7	1
South Africa	44.8 m	2,280	50

The table clearly shows that the shortage of personnel is compounded by their concentration in the Private Sector and in the main cities leaving the rural populations without access to support.

There are only seven optometry schools on the continent producing, on average, a total of 300 students a year. Most courses are four years in duration. At this rate, with no innovative interventions, it will be impossible for Africa's refractive error needs to be met.

It was in recognition of this enormous need that ICEE opened a dedicated Africa office in 1999. The team is headed by Professor Kovin Naidoo and is leading the effort to address the desperate need to increase the number of skilled eyecare personnel in order to improve eyecare in Africa.

The Inaugural World Congress on Refractive Error and Service Development 2007

The World Congress on Refractive Error and Service Development brings together leading experts to discuss the key scientific and public health challenges in refractive error. For the first time ever, a focused forum is available that will determine solutions to the technological, human resource and service delivery questions in meeting global refractive error needs.

For three days, Eyecare Professionals, Public Health Researchers and Administrators, Government and NGO Planners, Professional Associations and Industry Personnel come together with leading Clinical and Public Health Scientists to address the challenges of refractive correction needs.

The Congress is organised by the International Centre for Eyecare Education - ICEE, a not-for-profit, non-government organisation helping to bring much-needed eye care within reach of people around the world.

Over 250 million people need distance and near refractive correction but they don't have access to services or an affordable solution. The Durban Accord on Refractive Error and Presbyopia will be one of the outcomes of this Congress.

Venue: International Convention Centre,
Durban, South Africa
Date: 14 - 16 March 2007

For more information visit www.icee.org for Congress updates.

ICEE'S
Cycle for Sight
CHALLENGE

When: April, 2007
Length: 13 days
Destination: Vietnam or Southern China

Ever dreamed of cycling through South East Asia with some of your best friends and raising money for a great cause?

ICEE will help you fundraise to a base target which then qualifies you for a spot on the challenge tour. Your total trip costs are covered, including airfare, insurance, bike, accommodation, meals & support crew.

Email expressions of interest to icee@icee.org

Making a Donation

ICEE receives no government funding and has limited resources. You can support ICEE by making a donation by cash, cheque or credit card. (In Australia, all donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible.)

Tel: 1300 66 42 33 Email: donations@icee.org On Line: www.icee.org

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International Centre for Eyecare Education

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ICEE Newsletter 2006 Edition 2

WINTER EDITION



ICEE



Our eyes... a window to the world

giving
SIGHT

Message From The Chair

Welcome to the Winter Newsletter for ICEE.

In the coming months we have some exciting major new projects. We have just signed an agreement to partner with the Fred Hollows Foundation in Australia to set up a vision centre to deliver eyecare in the northern part of Sri Lanka. In our post tsunami eyecare work in Sri Lanka, we found that many people had no access to eyecare, and had never had an eye examination or been provided with the spectacles they needed to see. This vision centre will provide this vital service to some of the poorest people in Sri Lanka, giving them the gift of sight.

I am pleased to announce that our funding proposal to USAID has been successful. ICEE has recently been awarded a grant of USD\$300,000 over two years for a project focusing on a comprehensive school screening capacity development project in two provinces, Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. This project which includes rapid assessment and provision of spectacles will reach 2.5 million children in these two provinces.

Finally, we are busy putting together a fantastic program of the world's experts in refractive error technology, human resources and service delivery for the World Congress on Refractive Error and Service Development in Durban, South Africa, to be held from March 14 - 16, 2007.

This landmark Congress provides for the first time a forum for a wide range of people to seek solutions to meeting global refractive error needs. We hope that this Congress and all our activities help to bring an end to the unnecessary tragedy of refractive error blindness and impaired vision.

Your help is so important and ICEE desperately needs ongoing financial support to achieve our mission.



Professor Brien A Holden
Chair of ICEE

Humanitarian Award from Middle Eastern Ophthalmology



Professor Brien A Holden
with HRH Prince Abdulaziz
Bin Ahman Al Saud

The "Prince Abdulaziz Bin Ahmad Shield for the Prevention of Blindness" was presented to Professor Brien Holden, Chair of ICEE, by the Minister of Health H.E. Dr Hamad Bin Abdullah AlManea and HRH Prince Abdulaziz Bin Ahman Al Saud at the Saudi Ophthalmology 2006 International Symposium in March.

Professor Holden has dedicated his life to global research, education and over the last decade in particular, the delivery of eyecare to those in desperate need. Together with colleagues from Australia and around the world, Professor Holden founded ICEE in

1998 and is now Chair of ICEE, as well as being Chair of the Refractive Error Working Group of WHO; CEO of the Institute for Eye Research; Deputy CEO of the Vision Cooperative Research Centre; Board Member of VISION 2020: The Right to Sight; Co-Chair of VISION 2020 Australia, and Scientia Professor of the University of New South Wales. His latest challenge is as Chair of Optometry Giving Sight (OGS), a global fundraising program which encourages optometrists and their patients to fund the development of eyecare services, human resources and infrastructure needed to provide primary eyecare and low vision services around the world.

Dr Abdulaziz AlRajhi, Co-Chair for the Eastern Mediterranean Region, IAPB said, "We are privileged to present Professor Holden with this award in recognition of his contribution and long dedication to global prevention of blindness efforts."

Sri Lanka Update

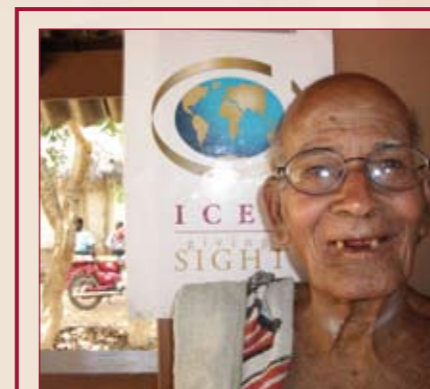
After the Boxing Day tsunami in 2004, ICEE was the first organisation to provide directed eyecare aid to the stricken coastal regions. Since then 26,699 people have had their eyes examined and 23,254 spectacles have been issued at no cost to the patient. Additionally, ICEE has provided eyecare education in refraction and primary eye care to 11 Sri Lankan health workers. Several of these Sri Lankan ICEE students are now working independently to address the eyecare requirements of the needy people in their communities. In the near future they will be working in purpose-built ICEE Vision Centres that are to be built in several regional areas.

After learning of the dreadful plight of Sri Lanka's plantation workers and their families, ICEE has extended its Sri Lankan activities and conducted its first clinics in the tea plantations. Located in the mountainous interior of Sri Lanka (2-6 hours drive from Colombo) these people are

among the most underprivileged and forgotten in Sri Lanka. The clinics have been a remarkable success and an expansion of the program is now underway. Following the successful model of the Tsunami eyecare program, these clinics will soon be accompanied by high-level training of suitable health workers in order to achieve our sustainable goals.

The work to be done in the tea plantations of Sri Lanka is immense. The suffering of generations cannot be reversed in an instant, but with our support and commitment the new generation of Sri Lanka's plantation population may at last obtain their basic right to sight.

Story by
Jane Kierath
ICEE Optometrist



In a small village near Mullaitivu, a 77 year old man came into our clinic complaining of poor vision in the distance. He had never had his eyes tested before, and was found to have cataracts and moderate myopia in both eyes. Correcting his script notably improved his vision. He could not have been happier with the glasses, smiling and thanking me greatly as he looked out into the pastures with his newly improved vision! Jane Kierath

Table of Achievements

Eye Care	Volunteers	Main Activities	Number of Patients Seen	Spectacles Given	Referrals For Treatment
4-11 February 2005	2 Optometrists	Needs assessment	-	-	-
4-20 March 2005	6 Optometrists	Eye care service delivery	2,366	2,019	83
1-17 April 2005	5 Optometrists	Eye care service delivery	2,903	2,560	100
13-27 May 2005	5 Optometrists	Eye care service delivery	1,467	1,216	79
17 June - 3 July 2005	3 Optometrists, 1 Nutritionist	Eye care service delivery and identifying local personnel for training	1,621	1,434	137
15-29 July 2005	5 Optometrists, 1 Educator	Training of 6 local healthcare workers, and eye care service delivery	2,074	1,935	100
12-26 August 2005	4 Optometrists, 1 Videographer	Eye care service delivery by volunteers and newly trained personnel; monitoring of locally trained personnel.	1,894	1,837	87
16 Sept - 1 Oct 2005	4 Optometrists	Eye care service delivery	2,782	2,396	146
14-30 October 2005	4 Optometrists	Eye care service delivery	3,071	2,383	133
2-18 December 2005	5 Optometrists, 1 Program Coordinator	Training of 6 local healthcare workers, and eye care service delivery	1,912	1,875	211
10-26 February 2006	7 Optometrists, 1 Program Coordinator	Training of 10 local healthcare workers, and eye care service delivery	2,685	2,437	142
24 March - 9 April 2006	5 Optometrists, 2 Educators, 1 OGS/CIBA Representative	Training of 4 local healthcare workers, eye care service delivery, investigation of need in Sri Lankan Hill Country (tea fields)	1,842	1,320	148
21 April - 7 May 2006	4 Optometrists, 1 Program Coordinator	Eye care service delivery in tea fields	2,082	1,842	147
Total			26,699	23,254	1,513