A2Z – The USAID Micronutrient and Child Blindness Project: Fostering Innovative Approaches to Saving Sight

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Program originates through Congressional directive

1991

$20m to 25 NGOs implementing activities in 58 countries

2005

Child Blindness Program managed under A2Z: The USAID Micronutrient and Child Blindness Project at the Academy for Educational Development (AED)

2010
Awards distributed in four competitive cycles beginning in June 2006

$6.4 million in total grant awards

3 Types of Grants:

- Organizational Development (OD) – 1 year grant, from $25,000 – $50,000
- Service Delivery (SD) – 2 year grant, from $100,000 - $500,000
- Refugee Service Delivery (RSD) – 2 year grant, $200,000
As of October 2008: 32 grants awarded to 23 organizations working in 25 countries throughout Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and Asia
Grantee Organizations

- Advocate for Youth
- African Union of The Blind
- Union Africaine des Aveugles
- IEF \textsc{International Eye Foundation}
- CONSEJO DE SALUD RURAL ANDINO
- The Fred Hollows Foundation
- KCCO
- Fudem \textsc{Salud y Vision}
- Helen Keller \textsc{International}
- cureblindness.org \textsc{Himalayan Cataract Project}
- CSF \text{to bring colour when life is dark}
- \textsc{ORBIS} \text{saving sight worldwide}
- cbm \text{Christian Blind Mission}
- together we can do more
- ICEE \textsc{Sight}
- PERKINS \textsc{School for the Blind}
- Seva \textsc{Foundation}
- Tanzania Society for the Blind (TSB)
- Rose \textsc{Grannies}
- Shri Sadguru Seva Sangh Trust
- In the Service of the Suffering Humanity
- Sightsavers \textsc{International}
- VisionSpring \textsc{Formerly Seva Foundation}
- V\textsc{ISUALIZA}
Priorities of the grant fund:

- Expand delivery of high-impact direct services (screening, treatment, and rehabilitation)
- Scale-up innovative approaches to service provision and project implementation
- Contribute to global knowledge base on effective approaches to large-scale pediatric eye care projects
A closer look at innovative approaches for...

- Case detection & management
- Service delivery
- Awareness raising
Case detection & management: Seva Foundation

- Grant recipient since 2007
- Nepal & Cambodia
- Coordinate comprehensive services targeting key issues in eye care
- Activities:
  - Community outreach
  - Multi-site screenings
  - Provision of eyeglasses
  - Equipment procurement
  - Subsidized surgery
  - Proactive case management
  - Capacity building & training
Challenge:

- 2/3 of all blind people are women, but they receive treatment less often than men.

- Disparity even greater among girls and boys.

Barriers include:

- Cost of surgery
- Inability to travel to surgical facility
- Differences in perceived value of surgery
- Lack of access to information and resources
- Fear of poor outcome
Case detection & management: Approach

- Target services toward girls, orphans, and rural populations
- Raise awareness of gender inequity
- Policy and advocacy
- Disaggregate project data by sex

- Identify gender-specific barriers
- Study strategies to increase service utilization by women
- Train program & partner staff on gender equity and health issues
Seva Achievements to date...

- **Training:**
  - 1,394 personnel trained to perform screening and refer

- **Screening:**
  - 283,979 children screened for refractive error and other eye conditions

- **Spectacles provision:**
  - 2,265 spectacles provided

- **Referrals:**
  - 8,461 cases referred to tertiary care providers

- **Cataract Surgeries:**
  - 574 pediatric cataract surgeries performed
Service Delivery: VisionSpring

- Grant recipient since 2006
- Delivers services in rural areas of 5 districts in Andhra Pradesh, India
- Expansion of model from adult-focused activities (presbyopia) to pediatric services (refractive error).

Activities:
- Training community members
- Community screening and referrals
- Provision of spectacles
- Eye health education
- Partnership-building
Service Delivery: Challenge

- Limited eye care services, especially in rural areas
- Eyeglasses are prohibitively expensive
- Untreated, presbyopia, can hinder the productivity of heads-of-household and wage earners
Service Delivery: Approach

- Apply a market-based solution that is locally appropriate and sustainable
- Train and empower community members to provide basic screening services and eyeglasses
- Increase availability of low-cost, high quality eyeglasses
- Coordinate services through existing health service network and available human resources
- Strengthen local economic opportunities
VisionSpring Achievements to date…

- Training:
  - 152 personnel trained to perform screening and refer

- Screening:
  - 84,646 adults screened for presbyopia and other eye conditions

- Spectacles provision:
  - 20,203 spectacles sold

- Referrals:
  - 24,080 cases referred to tertiary care providers
Awareness raising: Fred Hollows Foundation

- Grant recipient since 2007
- Quang Nam & Quang Ngai provinces, Vietnam
- Refractive error
- Activities:
  - Human resource development
  - Screening & referrals
  - Provision of spectacles and/or low vision aids
  - Medical and surgical treatment
  - Research – refractive error prevalence
  - Communication & awareness raising
Awareness raising: Challenge

- Refractive error is leading eye condition among schoolchildren
- Low community awareness of refractive error and available eye care services
- Children in need of eyeglasses are not wearing them
Awareness raising: Approach

- Deliver key messages through school talks
- Engage students in interactive activities: refractive error competition; skits; and traditional song and dance
FHF Achievements to date...

- **Training:**
  - 849 personnel trained to perform screening and refer

- **Screening:**
  - 33,971 children screened for refractive error and other eye conditions

- **Spectacles provision:**
  - 702 spectacles provided

- **Referrals:**
  - 1,127 cases referred to tertiary care providers
Overall Program Results

Personnel trained to perform screenings and/or refract...

8,432
Overall Program Results

Screening for visual acuity and other eye conditions...

1,301,714
HKI - Niger

124,866
VisionSpring - India
Children referred by screening for additional services (refraction, medical or surgical treatment)…

75,460

Fred Hollows Foundation, Vietnam

International Eye Foundation, Malawi
Overall Program Results

Children who are blind or with low vision having received therapies and/or vision devices…

3,440
Policy & advocacy to expand eye care services and special education...
Lessons Learned

- Innovation should be based on evidence.
- Approach must be appropriate to the setting.
- Innovation can be risky.
- Innovation should be supported even if expected outcomes are not fully achieved.
Support and scale-up innovative approaches to eye care service delivery

Document approaches and best practices

Share lessons learned and contribute to global knowledge base of large-scale pediatric eye care interventions
Thank you…

Questions? Please contact:

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