

The Global Initiative for the Elimination of Avoidable Blindness – Vision 2020: The Right to Sight

The Global Initiative – Vision 2020: The Right to Sight was officially launched on 18 February 1999 with the endorsement of **Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland**, Director-General, World Health Organization.

The mission of Vision 2020 is to eliminate the main causes of blindness in order to give all people of the world, particularly the millions of needlessly blind, the right to sight by the year 2020.

In the *Journal of Community Eye Health*, Volume 11, 1998, **Dr Bjorn Thylefors**, Director, Disability/Injury Prevention and Rehabilitation, World Health Organization, described the main emphases of the Global Initiative and the significant cooperation with the **Task Force of the Partnership Committee of Collaborating Non-Governmental Organizations**. Other authors who have written for us on the Global Initiative are **Dr R Pararajasegaram**, President, IAPB; **Mr Richard B Porter**, Executive Director, Sight Savers International and **Rev Christian Garms**, Executive Director, Christian Blind Mission International.

Priority needs focus on three broad categories:

1 Disease Control: with emphasis on **Cataract, Trachoma** and the 'SAFE' strategy, **Onchocerciasis, Childhood Blindness** and **Refractive Errors and Low Vision**.

2 Human Resource Development: stressing the primary health care approach and also the training of ophthalmologists, ophthalmic medical assistants, ophthalmic nurses and medical students.

3 Infrastructure and Appropriate Technology Development: developing sustainability in the use of modern technology, provision of eye beds, local production of eye medicines, refraction capability with spectacles and low vision devices and required surgical instrumentation.

The *Journal of Community Eye Health* will continue to invite expert authors in these fields to write in future issues of the Journal.



Spectacles were of real benefit to this young student in Uganda

Photo: Murray McGavin

The **Sixth General Assembly of the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB)**, in **Beijing, China, 5–10 September 1999**, will support and seek to develop further the programme of Vision 2020: the Right to Sight. For information on the IAPB Sixth General Assembly contact:

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EPIDEMIOLOGY RESEARCH AWARDS SCHEME

The **International Society of Geographical & Epidemiological Ophthalmology (ISGEO)** has been pleased to announce that, in 1997 **Dr George Jacob** (Papua New Guinea) and, in 1998, **Dr Okello Quinto** (Uganda) received the **ISGEO Start-up Research Grants**.

These grants (up to US\$1,000) are to help people living and working in developing countries initiate small/pilot ophthalmology research projects. Applications are being accepted for 1999 and a copy of the research application form can be obtained from:

**Dr Paul Courtright, ISGEO Secretary
BC Centre for Epidemiologic & International Ophthalmology
St. Paul's Hospital
1081 Burrard Street, Vancouver, BC,
V6Z 1Y6, CANADA
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THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF OPHTHALMOLOGISTS DIPLOMA IN OPHTHALMOLOGY EXAMINATION

The Royal College of Ophthalmologists has introduced an examination leading to the award of the Diploma in Ophthalmology (DRCOphth). The examination will be held twice a year, in June and November.

This Diploma is aimed at those not wishing to pursue a career as a consultant ophthalmologist in the United Kingdom. It should, therefore, be of interest to all doctors with an interest in ophthalmology working outside the European Union.

Details are available from:

**Examinations Office, The Royal College of Ophthalmologists,
17 Cornwall Terrace, London NW1 4QW, UK.**

Telephone: 00 44 (0) 171 935 0702 (extensions 24, 25, 26)

E-mail: rco.exams@btinternet.com