



The USAID Micronutrient and Child Blindness Project



2011 A2Z Child Blindness Program Final Partners Meeting Washington, DC July 25-26, 2011

MEETING REPORT

Prepared by: Kelly C. Josiah, A2Z Child Blindness Program Manager

BACKGROUND

As a component of A2Z: The USAID Micronutrient and Child Blindness Project, the A2Z Child Blindness Program uses competitive grants to reduce child blindness and improve eye health. Grants provide support to national and international eye care and health NGOs that deliver services to populations in need. Since 2005, the A2Z Child Blindness Program has awarded 41 grants to 24 local and international organizations to support work in 29 countries across Latin America, Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa.

The goals and priorities of the program are to:

- Expand delivery of high-impact direct services (including screening, treatment, education and rehabilitation);
- Scale-up innovative approaches to service provision and program implementation; and,
- Contribute to the global knowledge base on effective approaches to large-scale child eye health programs.

Grant-funded interventions include eye health education, vision screening, clinical and surgical services, training of health workers and community members, provision of necessary medical treatments including eyeglasses, and education and rehabilitation services for blind children.

The A2Z Child Blindness Program also designed and facilitated, in partnership with the International Eye Foundation (IEF), a series of three Regional Capacity Building Workshops in Program Design for Pediatric Eye Care Interventions. Workshops were held in Africa, Asia and Latin America in 2011.

As 2011 represents the sixth and final year of activity for the A2Z Child Blindness Program, A2Z invited approximately 80 people to attend the final partners meeting. Invitees included representatives of grantee organizations (past and present), promising and regionally active workshop participants, innovation speakers, academia, USAID and other stakeholders (Vision2020, the IAPB, Lions Clubs International, Standard Chartered Bank, etc.). More than 65 people attended the two day meeting representing

a cross section of the global child blindness community, including 21 A2Z grantee organizations. Ophthalmologists and optometrists from Emory University, Johns Hopkins' Wilmer Eye Institute and The New England College of Optometry also participated, as did representatives from international organizations such as the IAPB and Lions Clubs International Foundation. Several organizations selected from the each of the workshops were represented as well. Three presentations on innovative approaches to providing pediatric eye care services in developing countries were given, as well as one on a recently completed study on Child Self Refraction. Attendees reflected the geographic diversity of the A2Z Child Blindness Program, with eight people traveling from Latin America, seven from sub-Saharan Africa, and six from Asia.

The main objectives of the meeting included:

- Review preliminary results of the Cycle VI Operations Research grants;
- Share lessons learned and discuss the latest trends in global pediatric eye care through a series of panel discussions; and,
- Discuss innovative approaches and research.

A detailed meeting agenda and participant list are available in Appendix A. and B. respectively. Additionally, a list of the meeting presentations can be found in Appendix C. PDF versions of the presentations are also available for download at www.a2zproject.org.

OPENING

The meeting was opened by leaders from USAID and A2Z. Nadra Franklin, Vice President of Impact Assessment and Evaluation at FHI Development 360 LLC (formerly AED) and the A2Z Project Director welcomed participants to FHI and thanked the organizations for their efforts and achievements over the last six years. The A2Z Child Blindness Program has contributed to the development of new partnerships and lessons learned for AED.

USAID technical advisor, Roshelle Payes, also made an opening statement emphasizing the evolution of the overall program and acknowledging USAID's Frances Davidson's contributions to the area. She also highlighted the cross-cutting nature of eye health and how it must be viewed within the context of child survival, quality of life, and education. The USAID/A2Z Child Blindness Program has provided an opportunity for assessing these issues in a broader context.

A2Z CHILD BLINDNESS PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A2Z Child Blindness Program Manager, Kelly Josiah, presented a program overview, including a summary of the completed competitive grant cycles, the major service delivery results through FY11Q2, and other program activities. The 16 common indicators on which partners report on a quarterly basis have facilitated results reporting

across the program. The individual and cumulative M&E reporting tables have also enabled partners and A2Z to identify potential gaps in service delivery and areas for improvement in program planning.

HISTORY OF THE CHILD BLINDNESS CONGRESSIONAL EARMARK

Terrence “Terry” Peel, of Edington, Peel and Associates, a lobbyist and prior congressional staffer, spoke about the history of the earmark. It started in the early 1990s as a result of a congressional visit to Morocco. During the visit, a blind child was encountered and when asked why the child was blind, the answer given was that the child had a Vitamin A deficiency, something so inexpensive and simple to treat. Upon their return to the United States, research was done to find that there were over a million blind children in the world, many of which had avoidable blindness. He stated that the annual earmark was included the budget request, with Administration approval, for FY2012 at approximately \$1.9 million.

OPERATIONS RESEARCH FINDINGS: PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION

The bulk of the first day was devoted to presentations by six grantee organizations sharing the preliminary results of their Cycle VI Operations Research projects, as well as successes and challenges experienced in the course of performing the research. Most grantees encountered unexpected results and challenges while implementing their research plans, requiring flexibility to make mid-project adjustments.

Grant funding supported research projects focused on determining the barriers to acceptance, access and follow-up. The quality of life of children that had presented with visual acuity problems was also studied. The effectiveness of different school screening program models was analyzed, as well as the accuracy of the diagnoses resulting from screening programs. A pilot program for the integration of the Key Informant Method (KIM) into a child survival program was funded as well.

While organizations have made significant progress in identifying children in need of services and providing those services, there are still underserved, hard-to-reach communities where innovative approaches like the Key Informant Method fill in the gaps to locate the children in need. Nearly all of the project presentations underscored the importance of follow-up care to ensure enduringly positive visual outcomes. Several studies looked at the barriers to children presenting for treatment and follow-up care. Families often do not realize the importance of follow-up care for long-term positive outcomes. The grantee organizations explored some new strategies, incentives, and communication messages to overcome barriers to follow-up care and found that counseling for the child, family, teachers and employers as well as aggressive tracking by the medical institution is an effective combination, albeit very resource intensive.

PANEL DISCUSSION: FUTURE RESEARCH NEEDS

Dr. Susan Lewellan (KCCO/Emory) and Dr. P. Vijayalakshmi (Aravind) spoke about the anticipated future research needs for pediatric eye care in a global and regional context. A survey was completed by attendees that served as the basis for discussion and grouping. The attendees were broken into three groups – Asia, Africa and Latin America to discuss what they believed were the three most important topics that require further research in the field of pediatric visual impairment in their specific region. Results of the discussions were shared with the group as a whole.

PANEL DISCUSSION: KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION

Paul Courtright (KCCO) and Jerry Vincent (IRC) spoke about how their organizations have integrated knowledge translation efforts into their grant activities. KCCO hosted a workshop to show attendees how to translate research results and data into policy papers with the aim of ultimately influencing local and national policies. The IRC hosted an eye conference, bringing together IRC staff, local and national government employees and an IRC staffer from Kenya to discuss how the results of their operations research activities should inform future programming decisions.

SOCIAL INNOVATIONS: IDEO.org

The first day concluded with a presentation by Jocelyn Wyatt of IDEO.org. Ms. Wyatt spoke about the innovative, market-oriented approaches to program design.

A2Z CHILD BLINDNESS PROGRAM'S REGIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOPS IN PROGRAM DESIGN FOR PEDIATRIC EYE CARE INTERVENTIONS

The second day of the meeting began with a presentation on the A2Z Child Blindness Program's Regional Capacity Building Workshops in Program Design for Pediatric Eye Care Interventions. The workshops were designed and facilitated by A2Z in partnership with the International Eye Foundation. Three workshops were held in 2011, in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

PANEL DISCUSSION: EDUCATION AND REHABILITATION

A panel discussion on education and rehabilitation of low vision and blind children was held on the second day. Presentations were given by Tanuja Britan from Joseph Eye Hospital in India, Karen van Dijk from CBM and Anne Hayes from Perkins School for the Blind. Karen Heinicke-Motsch from CBM facilitated the panel discussion. The panelists discussed their organizations' approaches to education and rehabilitation and the challenges and successes that they've experienced.

MICROCONSIGNMENT MODEL: COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE SOLUTIONS AND VISIONSPRING

A joint presentation was made by Greg van Kirk of Community Enterprise Solutions and Peter Eliassen of VisionSpring. Mr. van Kirk discussed the evolution of the microconsignment model that his organization uses and the integration of visual acuity screening and the provision of eyeglasses into the model. Mr. Eliassen discussed VisionSpring's collaboration with Community Enterprise Solutions and their own business model's evolution.

CRITICAL DEBATE: ADJUSTABLE SPECTACLES AND SELF-REFRACTION RESEARCH: CENTRE FOR VISION IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

Bruce Moore presented the findings of a recent World Bank-financed research project entitled the Boston Child Self-Refracton Study.

PANEL DISCUSSION: REGIONAL TRENDS IN PEDIATRIC EYE CARE

A panel discussion on regional trends in pediatric eye care was the last technical piece of the 2 day meeting. Panelists included Paul Courtright – Africa, Andrea Zin – Latin America, P. Vijayalakshmi – Asia and Phoebe Lenhart – Industrialized Countries. Victoria Sheffield from the International Eye Foundation facilitated the panel discussion. The panelists discussed regional trends in pediatric eye care in specialty areas including education and low vision, ROP and infantile cataract.

CLOSING REMARKS

Kelly Josiah made brief closing remarks and the two day meeting concluded with a reception.

3:40 p.m. **Panel Discussion** on Knowledge Translation *P. Courtright/J. Vincent*

4:30 p.m. *Break*

4:40 p.m. Social Innovations *J. Wyatt - IDEO.org*

5:30 p.m. Day 1 Closing Remarks *K. Josiah*

5:30 p.m. Reception

➤ *Globe Theater, Florida Entrance, 1st Floor North Building*

Tuesday, July 26, 2011 GLOBE THEATER (1st Floor North – Florida Avenue Entrance)

8:30 a.m. Breakfast

9:00 a.m. Presentation of Day 2 Goals & Objectives *K. Josiah*

9:10 a.m. Presentation on the A2Z Regional Workshops in Program Design *K. Josiah*

9:35 a.m. **Panel Discussion** on Education and Rehabilitation *T. Britto/K. van Dijk/A. Hayes*

10:45 a.m. *Break*

11:00 a.m. MicroConsignment Model *G. van Kirk - Community Enterprise Solutions/P. Eliasson - Visionspring*

11:40 a.m. Critical Debate: Adjustable Spectacles and Self-Refractive Research *B. Moore - Centre for Vision in the Developing World*

12:20 p.m. *Lunch Break – Greeley Hall*

1:30 p.m. Poster Session for Cycle V Service Delivery Grantees

2:00 p.m. **Panel Discussion** on Regional Trends in Pediatric Eye Care *P. Courtright-Africa
A. Zin-Latin America
P. Vijayalakshmi- Asia
P. Lenhart-US*

3:30 p.m. Closing Remarks *K. Josiah*

3:45 p.m. Conclusion of A2Z Child Blindness Program Partners Meeting

3:45 p.m. Closing Reception

➤ *Globe Theater, Florida Entrance, 1st Floor North Building*

APPENDIX B.

List of Attendees A2Z Child Blindness Program Partners Meeting Washington, DC - July 25-26, 2011	
DC BASED ATTENDEES	
Name	Organization
Roshelle Payes	USAID
Kelly Josiah	FHI Development 360
Frank Beadle De Palomo	FHI Development 361
Nadra Franklin	FHI Development 360
Cynthia Arciaga	FHI Development 360
Omar Dary	FHI Development 360
Patricia Preware	FHI Development 360
Lesley Oot	FHI Development 360
Zo Rambelason	FHI Development 360
Martin Muiri	FHI Development 360
Lotfi Kourdali	FHI Development 360
Rishi Choudhary	FHI Development 360
Phillis Kim	FHI Development 360
William Dean	FHI Development 360
Victoria Sheffield	International Eye Foundation
Raheem Rahmathullah	International Eye Foundation
John Barrows	International Eye Foundation
Karen Heinicke-Motsch	Christian Blind Mission (CBM)
Charlie DeWitt	Lions Clubs International Foundation
Sarah Craciunoiu	International Relief and Development
Jocelyn Wyatt	IDEO.org
Terry Peel	Edington, Peel and Associates
David Friedman	The Johns Hopkins Hospital, the Wilmer Eye Institute
Johannes Van Damme	FHI 360
Heidi Bowie	IRC/Salus University
Amanda Parsons	McAllister & Quinn
Greg Van Kirk	Community Enterprise Solutions
NY BASED ATTENDEES	
Kerry Stalonas	ORBIS International
Joan McLeod-Omawale	ORBIS International
Nick Kourgialis	HKI

US BASED ATTENDEES	
Amanda Marr	Seva Foundation
Paul Courtright	Kilimanjaro Centre for Community Ophthalmology (KCCO)
Anne Hayes	Perkins School for the Blind
Bruce Moore	New England College of Optometry (<i>Centre for Vision in the Developing World</i>)
Susan Lewellan	Emory/KCCO
Phoebe Lenhart	Emory University
Phillip Albano	Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF)
Katharine Keller	Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF)
Peter Eliassen	VisionSpring
EUROPE BASED ATTENDEES	
Karin Van Dijk	CBM
Sally Crook	Standard Chartered Bank - Seeing is Believing Program
ASIA BASED ATTENDEES	
Bhisma Prasad Rath	Bhoomika Eye Hospital
Tanuja Britto	Joseph Eye Hospital (CBM's Sub)
Parikshit Gogate	(ORBIS Cycle VI Partner) Lions National Association for the Blind Eye Hospital
Widya Prasetyanti	Helen Keller International - Indonesia
Jerry Vincent	International Rescue Committee
P. Vijayalakshmi	Aravind Eye Hospital
AFRICA BASED ATTENDEES	
Khumbo Kalua	Blantyre Institute for Community Ophthalmology (BICO)
Fortunate Shija	Kilimanjaro Centre for Community Ophthalmology (KCCO)
Johnson Ngorok	Sightsavers International
Chilsehe Mboni	KCCO/Eye Dept, Kitwe Central Hospital, Kitwe, Zambia
Ibrahim Matende	Lighthouse for Christ Eye Centre
Yashika Maharaj	ICEE
Mildred Ulaikere	Eye Foundation Hospital Group/Deseret Community Vision Institute
LATIN AMERICA BASED ATTENDEES	
Jaime Huaman	IRO
Rosa Adrianzén	IRO
Leticia Machuca	Consejo de Salud Rural Andino
Ramiro Llanque	Consejo de Salud Rural Andino
Daniel Ortiz	Consejo de Salud Rural Andino
Andrea Recino	Visualiza
Andrea Zin	Instituto Fernandes Figueira, FIOCRUZ
Luz Gordillo	Instituto Damos Visión, Lima

APPENDIX C.

LIST OF PRESENTATIONS POSTED ON THE A2Z WEBSITE

www.a2zproject.org

A2Z Child Blindness Program

FHI Development 360 LLC - Kelly Josiah
A2Z Child Blindness Program Overview

A2Z Regional Capacity Building Workshops

Cycle VI Operations Research Grantee Presentations of Preliminary Results

Kilimanjaro Centre for Community Ophthalmology - Fortunate Shija and Susan Lewellan
Decreasing delay in pediatric presentation to CEHTF

International Eye Foundation and the Blantyre Centre for Community Ophthalmology - John Barrows and Khumbo Kalua
Exploring community solutions to improve children's access and acceptance to cataract surgery, optical corrections and follow-up in Southern Malawi

Christian Blind Mission and the Joseph Eye Hospital - Karin van Dijk and Tanuja Britan
Effectiveness of low vision care for children in Tamil Nadu: A follow-up study on children with low vision attending mainstream schools

ORBIS International and the Lions NAB Eye Hospital - Kerry Stalonas and Parikshit Gogate
Post-operative continued follow-up leads to better visual outcomes, which leads to better patient quality of life

Helen Keller International - Widya Prasentyanti
Operations research to assess a new training model for visual acuity screening of children

International Rescue Committee - Jerry Vincent
Evaluation refraction accuracy and pilot testing the integration of the Key Informant Method

Panel Presentations

Panel: Education and Rehabilitation

Joseph Eye Hospital - Tanuja Britan

Christian Blind Mission - Karin van Dijk

Panel: Regional Trends in Pediatric Eye Care

ROP

Infantile Cataract

Low Vision and Education

Asia - Paul Courtright

Africa - P. Vijayalakshmi

Innovation Speakers

Adjustable Spectacles and Self-Refractive Research - Bruce Moore

VisionSpring - Peter Eliassen

IDEO.org - Jocelyn Wyatt