Regional trends in paediatric eye care: Africa
Background

Current challenges

Anticipated trends
Changing patterns of blindness and visual impairment in children in Africa

- Vitamin A deficiency/measles related corneal disease reduced
- Congenital/ developmental cataract is one the leading causes of blindness in children
- Refractive error in children uncommon in Africa

Gogate et al, PLOS Medicine 2009
The “big picture”

Up to 100,000 blind due to congenital cataract in Africa

20,000 children born each year with congenital cataract

Each year = +1 million years living in blindness

1,500 get surgery
Child Eye Health Tertiary Facilities in Africa

Kenya:
- Kenyatta
- Kikuyu
- Sabatia
- Lighthouse

Uganda:
- Mengo
- Ruharo
- Tororo

Walidian

Menelik

Korle Bu

New or under development

IOTA

Nigeria:
- Ibadan
- Jos
- Kano
- Lagos
- Calabar
- Kaduna
- Port Harcourt

Kinshasa

Tanzania:
- CCBRT
- KCMC

South Africa:
- Johannesburg
- Pretoria
- Cape Town
- Durban
Building & equipping not enough: Challenges in addressing vision loss in children in Africa

- Too few children identified, referred, get in
- Long delay in presentation
- Poor follow up after surgery
- Lack of proper rehabilitation/education (many not-blind kids in schools for the blind)
Building & equipping not enough: Challenges in addressing vision loss in children in Africa

• Duplication of effort
• Mal-distribution of services
• CEHTF do not have adequate HR
  – Anaesthesia
  – Childhood Blindness Coordinator
• Lack of awareness of issues by general health workers
Key informants to find kids in Madagascar
Tackling the challenges: Trends in Africa

- More systematic (evidence-based) planning
- More comprehensive training
- Equipment & supplies (cheaper IOLs)
- Programmes to get kids in becoming more evidence-based
- More pro-active mechanisms to make sure they get follow up
- Spectacles and low vision services improving
Perspectives on what is needed in the next 9 years

- CEHTF expansion
  - Francophone Africa
- CEHTF strengthening
  - Programme approach
- Embed training re childhood blindness in routine MCH training activities
- Link with education strengthened