



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION



49th DIRECTING COUNCIL
61st SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE

Washington, D.C., USA, 28 September-2 October 2009

CD49.R11 (Eng.)
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RESOLUTION

CD49.R11

**PLAN OF ACTION ON THE PREVENTION OF AVOIDABLE BLINDNESS
AND VISUAL IMPAIRMENT**

THE 49th DIRECTING COUNCIL,

Having reviewed Document CD49/19 *Plan of Action on the Prevention of Avoidable Blindness and Visual Impairment*;

Recalling Resolution WHA56.26 of the World Health Assembly on the elimination of avoidable blindness;

Noting that visual disability is a prevalent problem in the Region and is related to poverty and social marginalization;

Aware that most of the causes of blindness are avoidable and that treatments available are among the most successful and cost-effective of all health interventions;

Acknowledging that preventing blindness and visual impairment relieves poverty and improves opportunities for education and employment;

Appreciating the efforts made by Member States in recent years to prevent avoidable blindness, but mindful of the need for further action,

RESOLVES:

1. To approve the Plan of Action on the Prevention of Avoidable Blindness and Visual Impairment.
2. To urge Member States to:
 - (a) establish national coordinating committees to help develop and implement national blindness prevention plans;
 - (b) include prevention of avoidable blindness and visual impairment in national development plans and goals;
 - (c) advance the integration of prevention of blindness and visual impairment in existing plans and programs for primary health care at the national level, ensuring their sensitivity to gender and ethnicity;
 - (d) support the mobilization of resources for eliminating avoidable blindness;
 - (e) encourage partnerships between the public sector, nongovernmental organizations, private sector, civil society, and communities in programs and activities that promote the prevention of blindness,
 - (f) encourage intercountry cooperation in the areas of blindness and visual impairment prevention and care.
3. To request the Director to:
 - (a) support the implementation of the Plan of Action on the Prevention of Avoidable Blindness and Visual Impairment;
 - (b) maintain and strengthen the Secretariat's collaboration with Member States on the prevention of blindness,
 - (c) promote technical cooperation among countries and the development of strategic partnerships in activities to protect ocular health.

(Seventh plenary, 1 October 2009)