



PRESENTATION DOSSIER 2026

EYES OF THE WORLD FOUNDATION

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ABOUT THE FOUNDATION

BLINDNESS IN THE WORLD

- There are **1.1 billion** people in the world with vision loss.
- **161 million** people have uncorrected refractive errors, **100 million** have cataracts, and **510 million** have near-vision impairment.
- **90%** of cases of visual impairment could be prevented or treated.
- **55%** of people with visual impairment are women.
- **90%** of people with visual impairment live in low- and middle-income countries.
- The annual global productivity loss due to visual impairment is estimated at approximately **411 billion** US dollars per year.



MISSION

The Eyes of the world Foundation is a non-profit organization that works to ensure that people with visual impairments and limited economic resources receive **quality ophthalmological care** through their local health services.

We create the necessary conditions to reduce the incidence of eye diseases in every territory where we operate, and we **raise public awareness** about the causes of inequality in access to eye health worldwide.

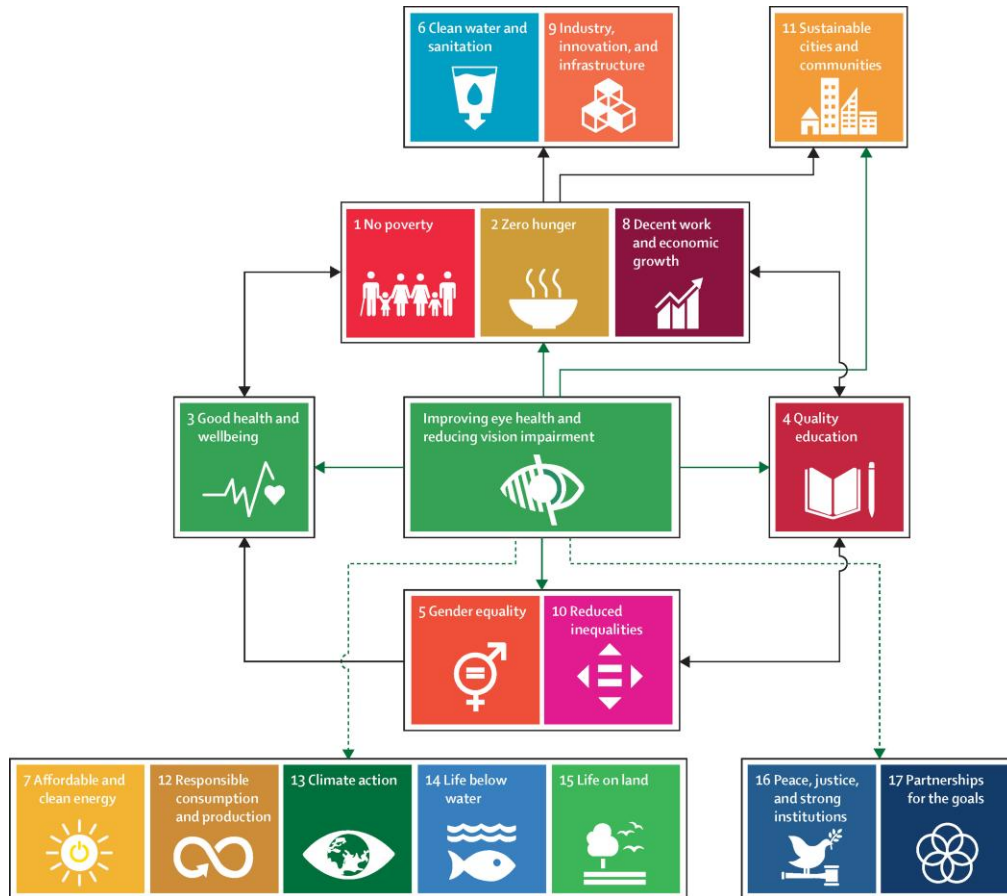
VISION

Eyes of the world aims for a world in which no one is needlessly blind, where the **right to sight** is effective, and everyone has the opportunity to develop their human potential.

ORIGINS

The Foundation was created in July 2001 by **Rafael Ribó and Borja Corcóstegui**. It began to take shape six months earlier, following their trip to the Sahrawi refugee camps in Tindouf (Algeria). The precarious healthcare situation and the visual impairments affecting the local population alerted them to the need to create an organization to improve these conditions.

CONTRIBUTION TO SDGs



Solid green arrows: relationships with direct evidence of a beneficial effect.

Black arrows: probable indirect effects.

Dashed green arrows: hypothetical beneficial effects.

INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH

Eyes of the world works in network with leading international organizations in support of the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, within the framework of the **International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB)**, of which the Foundation is a member of the Advisory Board, and in line with the World Health Assembly resolution on integrated, people-centered eye health. Restoring sight to people or preventing them from losing it is an achievable and efficient goal that serves as an accelerator of the 2030 Agenda.



OBJECTIVES AND ACTION AREAS

- **Train local medical professionals and provide technical knowledge.**

Priority is given to capacity building so that local professionals can meet the eye health needs of their population. This is achieved through on-the-ground specialists, distance learning courses, video conferences, and study grants. It also includes training optical technicians, electromedical technicians, primary care staff, and teachers to detect visual problems in schools. Since 2001, nearly 20,000 professionals have been trained.

- **Prevent the causes of avoidable blindness.**

Awareness campaigns are organized on eye hygiene, early detection, and referral to health centers, reaching approximately 60,000 people annually. These activities are implemented with community associations and take into account factors such as gender, income, nutrition, water, and sanitation. School screenings and studies on disease prevalence are also carried out.

- **Equip health centers with the necessary equipment and consumable materials for medical practice.**

Supplies, equipment, and consumables are provided to health centers and public optical services to create fully equipped ophthalmic units, including consultation rooms and operating theaters. Optical workshops are established to improve access to glasses for people with fewer resources and with uncorrected refractive errors.



OBJECTIVES AND ACTION AREAS



- **Improve the visual health of people with ocular diseases.**

Periodic surgical and medical teams made up of healthcare experts, mainly local professionals, are deployed to visit people with visual impairments in rural and remote areas of each region, performing cataract and other surgeries on the most vulnerable populations. Since 2001, more than 1,500,000 consultations and 60,000 surgical procedures have been carried out.

- **Contribute to the improvement of eye health management systems and procedures.**

Collaboration with local authorities and other organizations is aimed at strengthening ophthalmic healthcare systems in the countries where it operates, promoting the self-management of health professionals, implementing protocols and monitoring tools, and supporting the creation or updating of national eye health plans in regions where they do not exist.

- **Raise public awareness about the poor state of eye health in the world's poorest countries.**

The global ophthalmic reality is disseminated and awareness is raised about eye health needs through exhibitions, talks, round tables, professional forums, and global citizenship education projects. The aim is to foster civic engagement with the right to sight, promoting participation and connection with the Foundation.

WORK CONTEXTS

SAHARAWI REFUGEE CAMPS IN TINDOUF

Created in 2001 as the Foundation's initial project, the **Eyes of the Sahara** programme carries out its activities in the United Nations camps in Tindouf, Algeria.

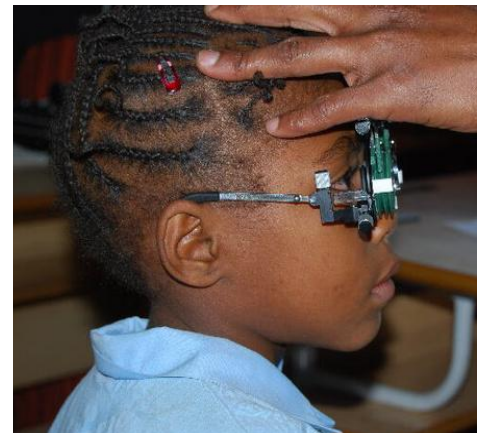
The Sahrawi people have been in exile for 50 years under harsh conditions, with a healthcare system dependent on external aid and affected by frequent eye health problems. The Foundation supports the local counterpart while the Ministry of Health and the RASD Ophthalmology Service progressively take on responsibilities, creating a network of eye health services with clinics and optical workshops in each wilaya, staffed by technicians trained by the organization.



MOZAMBIQUE

The **Eyes of Mozambique** programme, launched in 2002, focuses on the province of Inhambane in the southern part of the African country.

The population of Inhambane lives with scarce healthcare resources and a high prevalence of visual problems, worsened by the lack of ophthalmology specialists. The prevalence of visual impairment in Mozambique is 4.1% (468,796 affected people), with a total of 146,320 people who are blind. The project promotes infrastructure, training, and mobile services to expand eye care and improve access in remote areas.



WORK CONTEXTS

BOLIVIA

The activities of the Eyes of Bolivia programme—launched in 2003—take place mainly in the departments of La Paz, Tarija, and Oruro.

Bolivia presents major inequalities and limited access to healthcare, with a high prevalence of visual problems and a shortage of ophthalmologists in rural areas. The Foundation has developed an ophthalmic care network in El Alto, integrated into the public health system and managed by local professionals, and seeks to replicate this model in Tarija and Oruro. In addition, a recent agreement has been signed with the Departmental Health Service of Potosí to improve eye care in the region, identifying eye health needs and strengthening the capacities of the public health system.



MALI

The Foundation launched the Ojos de Mali programme in 2008 in the Mopti region in the south of the African country, with activities also at the Institute of Tropical Ophthalmology of Africa, located in Bamako.

Mali is currently facing an open political and military conflict that makes work in the country difficult. It suffers from poverty, instability, and a limited healthcare system, with a high prevalence of avoidable blindness and services concentrated in the capital. There are around 170,000 blind people, while the Mopti Ophthalmology Service has only one ophthalmologist and three technicians. Despite this, the Foundation has equipped the IOTA in Bamako with a retinal unit and trains its professionals, turning it into a reference centre for Mali and other African countries.



MAIN RESULTS

SAHARA

Since 2022, patients who require surgery are treated outside the camps, in the wilaya of Bechar, Algeria, where Eyes of the world has a **house to accommodate patients and their families** and is responsible for organizing transport and scheduling appointments. Both initial screening and follow-up are carried out in the camps, at the **new ophthalmic care centre** (created in 2023).



MOZAMBIQUE

Eyes of the world brings eye health closer to vulnerable populations through a **mobile optical unit** in rural areas without permanent services and ensures full care in three hospitals through surgical campaigns. In addition, the **first phase of the new ophthalmology building at Inhambane Provincial Hospital** has already been inaugurated (March 2026). It also promotes prevention and early detection of eye diseases and works with local organizations to **overcome gender barriers** that limit access for women and girls, especially through **awareness programmes and education** on inclusive masculinities.



MAIN RESULTS

BOLIVIA

Eyes of the world supports public health authorities in the country through the training and continuous improvement of local professionals, including a **wet lab** for the surgical practice of ophthalmologists. It promotes eye health prevention among vulnerable populations by **training community health promoters, empowering women, and spreading eye hygiene habits** in rural areas. In addition, it works with public administrations to implement **school eye health programmes**, driven by family associations, enabling early detection and providing glasses to improve school performance.



MALI

Eyes of the world works to improve the eye health of people with limited resources, facilitating access from community health centres to specialised care at **Mopti Hospital and the Bankass Reference Centre**, supplying the necessary **materials and equipment**. The project also promotes **prevention** through visual acuity screening and early detection in schools, as well as **microcredit initiatives** for women that foster their autonomy and access to eye care. The Foundation currently faces the challenge of supporting **populations displaced by the conflict in the north of the country**.



THERE... AND NOW HERE TOO: EYES NEARBY

WORK CONTEXT: HOMELESS POPULATION

In September 2025, Eyes of the world launched, for the first time in Spain, a pilot aimed at guaranteeing the right to eye health for people experiencing homelessness in Barcelona.

Nearly 5,000 people experiencing homelessness live in Barcelona, and many of them had not had their eyesight checked or received ophthalmic treatment for years. In response to this situation, Eyes of the world launched the project “Eyes nearby” in partnership with Arrels Foundation and the Department of Health of the Government of Catalonia. The initiative combines training and awareness-raising for Arrels professionals, early detection, comprehensive eye examinations carried out by specialist volunteers, the provision of glasses, and support in accessing the public healthcare system in cases of serious eye conditions.



MAIN RESULTS

The results obtained clearly demonstrate the relevance and necessity of the project: 90% of the people assisted required glasses, while 14% had to be referred to and supported through the public healthcare system to receive specialist care.

Improved vision has a direct impact on the autonomy, mobility, and interaction with the surrounding environment of the people assisted. The project has laid the foundations for a sustainable and replicable model of comprehensive eye care for people experiencing social exclusion.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- **Rafael Ribó** - President and member of the Executive Committee.
- **Borja Corcóstegui** - Vice President and member of the Executive Committee.
- **Daniel Capdevila Dalmau** - Secretary and member of the Executive Committee.
- **Núria Ramon Garcia** - Head of Strategic Collaborations and member of the Executive Committee.
- **Gloria Gálvez Hernando** - representing the Government of Catalonia. Secretary of Health Care and Participation of the Department of Health.
- **Maria Eugènia Gay Rosell** - representing the Barcelona Provincial Council. Deputy for International Relations and the 2030 Agenda.
- **Marta Villanueva Cendán** - representing Barcelona City Council. Councillor for Health, People with Disabilities, and Strategy against Loneliness.
- **Enric Botí Castro de la Peña** - representing Fundación ONCE for Latin America (FOAL). ONCE regional delegate in Catalonia.
- **Josep Maria Argimon** - Director of Infrastructure at the BBRC of the Pasqual Maragall Foundation.
- **Elena Arrondo Murillo** - ophthalmologist.
- **Maria Leonor Beleza** - President of the Champalimaud Foundation.
- **Josep Lluís Güell Villanueva** - ophthalmologist.
- **Ana Pastor Julián** - medical doctor.
- **Xavier Trias** - medical doctor.
- **Maria Teresa Vilalta Ferrer** - economist.



BUDGET

In 2026, the Foundation plans to generate **€2,961,382** in revenue, of which €2,077,582 will come from public contributions and €883,800 from private funding. Regarding expenditure, Eyes of the world expects to allocate 80% of its resources to **program activities** and 20% to the **Foundation's support functions**.

VOLUNTEERING NETWORK AND TERRITORIAL OUTREACH

Eyes of the world has a volunteer network made up of professionals in ophthalmology, surgical instrumentation, optometry, anesthesia, biomedical engineering, and other fields, who contribute on a voluntary basis to activities supporting people with visual impairments. Their work is sustained thanks to institutions, companies, and individuals who provide financial resources, materials, or indirect support. Based in Barcelona, the Foundation has branches in the **Basque Country, Navarre, the Valencian Community, Andalusia, and Madrid**, as well as regional hubs in Portugal, France, and Argentina.

OUTSTANDING ENDORSEMENT

Since 2001, representatives from multiple public administrations, CEOs of major international foundations and private companies, and prominent public figures with international reach have been involved in Eyes of the world's work, such as **Antoni Tàpies, Miquel Barceló, Andreu Alfaro, Jaume Plensa, Javier Bardem, Pep Guardiola, Ferran Adrià, the Roca brothers, Mariem Hassan, Lang Lang, Lluís Claret, Barbara Hendricks, Jordi Savall, Eduardo Galeano, Eduardo Mendoza...**

