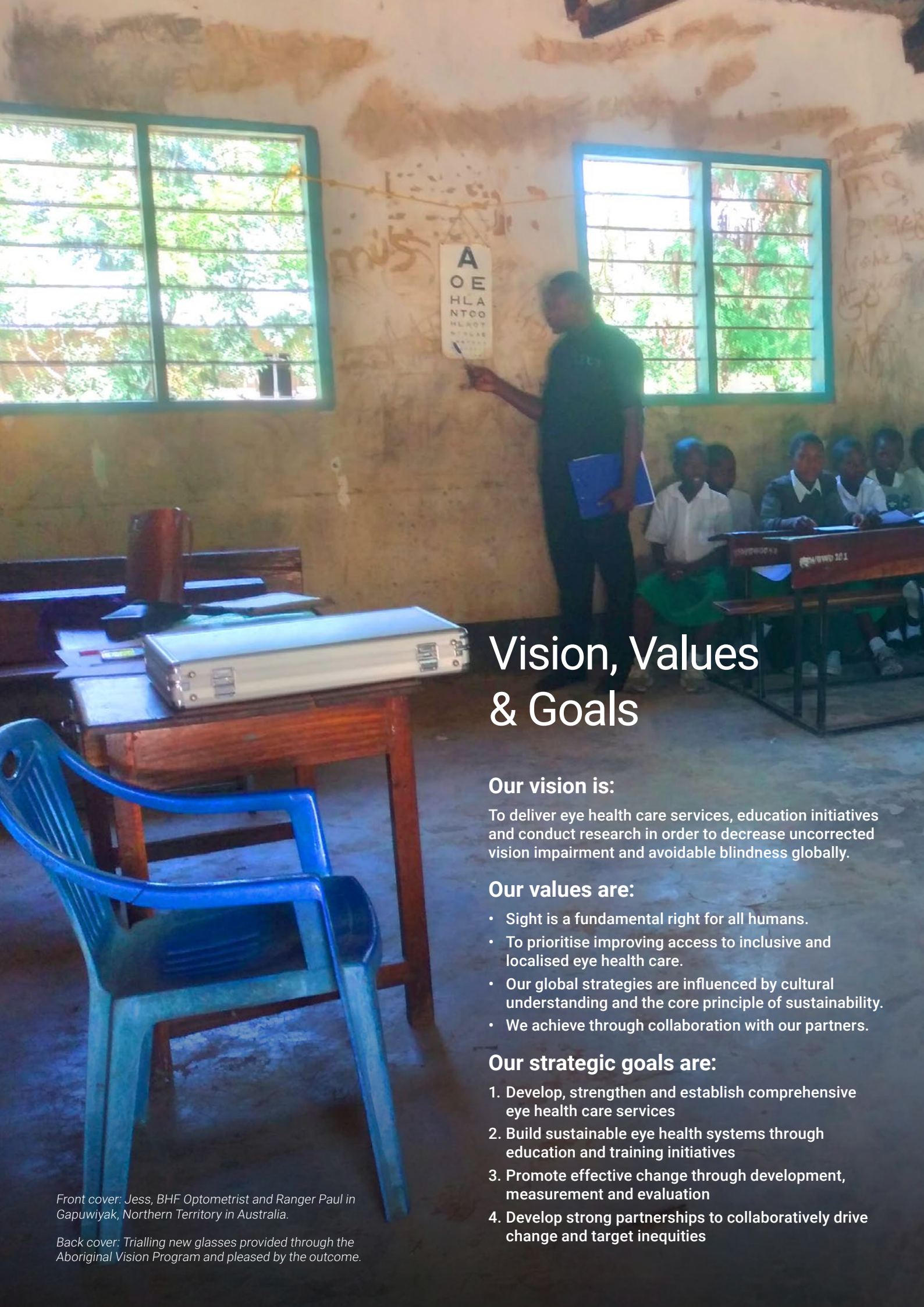




**Brien Holden  
FOUNDATION**

Annual Review  
**2021**





# Vision, Values & Goals

## Our vision is:

To deliver eye health care services, education initiatives and conduct research in order to decrease uncorrected vision impairment and avoidable blindness globally.

## Our values are:

- Sight is a fundamental right for all humans.
- To prioritise improving access to inclusive and localised eye health care.
- Our global strategies are influenced by cultural understanding and the core principle of sustainability.
- We achieve through collaboration with our partners.

## Our strategic goals are:

1. Develop, strengthen and establish comprehensive eye health care services
2. Build sustainable eye health systems through education and training initiatives
3. Promote effective change through development, measurement and evaluation
4. Develop strong partnerships to collaboratively drive change and target inequities

Front cover: Jess, BHF Optometrist and Ranger Paul in Gapuwiyak, Northern Territory in Australia.

Back cover: Trialling new glasses provided through the Aboriginal Vision Program and pleased by the outcome.





This photo: School screening in a Tanzanian school as part of a research study



Gender focused World Sight Day eye awareness celebrations in Pakistan

## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the global health sector has been profound. During the reporting period, Brien Holden Foundation achieved its core deliverables by evolving its programs and adapting its operational strategies.

Completing our reaccreditation process with the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) was an intense and valuable process, and we have baseline accreditation with the Australian Government until 2026. This enables our work to continue under the Australian NGO Cooperation Program working internationally with local partners running eye health care projects that have a direct impact on the individuals, institutions and communities involved.

Decreases in funding and uncertain future trends in support for eye health care brought difficult decisions to be made on the long-term future of some of the Foundation's older international programs. A localisation solution was followed for Cambodia and Sri Lanka Programs which involved the hand over to former staff setting up local NGOs, private practices and a valued partner taking over and progressing an established footprint.

Our Australia Program amplified its efforts and dedication to the *Strong Eyes, Strong Communities* mandate working collaboratively to support the Australian Government's commitment to end avoidable blindness in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities by 2025. This year the Aboriginal Vision Program provided optometry services to 9000 people across urban, rural, and remote settings using a mix of face-to-face and telehealth delivery to enable provision. Collaborative progress forged ahead within the working groups; Children's Vision Working Group and the National Subsidised Spectacle Schemes Project Group.

The Foundation continues to be a member of Vision 2020 Australia participating in the four national policy committees: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee; Independence and Participation Committee; Prevention and Early Intervention Committee and the Global Committee collaboratively working to embed and strengthen eye health systems across the eye health care sector with Australia, the Pacific and Southeast Asia regions.

In Papua New Guinea we worked closely with our diverse partners to complete the 3-year Phase II of the Strengthening Eye Health Systems Project funded by Lion Clubs

International Foundation and DFAT, achieving progressive outcomes for the eye health systems nationally. The project achieved good advances developing critical health linkages and increasing robustness of referral pathways between existing facilities and health teams.

One outstanding achievement made by Vietnam Program this year was the culmination of much dedicated and collaborative advocacy over the last decade was the Vietnamese Ministry of Health ratifying the optometrist profession. This change means enormous progress for optometry service provision as optometry will become embedded within the public health system enabling the 182 Vietnamese-trained optometrists to be gainfully employment as eye health care professionals.

Believing eye health care is a fundamental right keeps our attention firmly on the catalytic role we play in the communities we support. Pakistan as a nation worked progressively against the effects of Covid-19 on a large population. Through DFAT supported Pivot Projects our dedicated team worked tirelessly with Government, alongside partners to deliver PPE kits where needed during the lockdown periods and despite all the barriers to service



provision managed to deliver much needed services to 331,403 people during the reporting period. In Haiti, the country has faced great challenges in addition to Covid-19, despite this, progress has been made working collaboratively with our committed partners of the optometry development project which supports the first optometry school in Haiti and the 38 students currently enrolled in years 1,2 and 3.

Research advanced well during the reporting period seeing the successful completion of the study on the Effectiveness of teacher-led

school-based eye health programs in Tanzania and Vietnam. This research built on work conducted by our researchers 10 years ago in 2011, and preliminary findings were indicative of the Brien Holden Vision Institute projected increase of prevalence rates of refractive error and myopia: that more than 5 billion people may experience myopia by 2050.

Believing resilience and evolvement to be drivers of long-term outcomes and measurable impact and holding this firmly in mind, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the

staff of the Foundation, including our hard-working Board. Reaching with equal gratefulness to our dedicated and committed partner organisations and colleagues both here in Australia and across the international programs. Together our efforts are making a difference to many lives through aligned development aims, continual strengthening of health systems and increased access to good vision.

Kind regards,  
Yvette Waddell

## Key Performance Outcomes 2021

July 2020 – June 2021

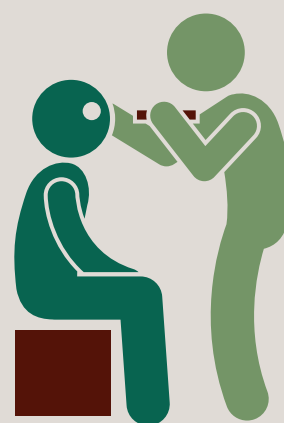
Progress towards achieving the goals of the strategic plan is assessed against defined indicators and targets of the current strategic plan. At a programmatic level all projects are guided by the Foundation's revised Project Cycle Management system and its regular and iterative processes. At an operational level, all new and current project plans demonstrate how they directly align with the objectives of the strategic plan. Data collected at

a project and operational level is analysed to report against the indicators and targets. Country strategic plans are followed for each location.

Data is collected directly from within the Foundation's monitoring and evaluating database and indirectly from our partners data set tools. The totals are a mix of both these quantitative methods of capture. They are analysed to assess how the projects are

progressing, measure the impact of the work undertaken to ensure accountability to funders and the community served, and how overall the organisation is progressing against its strategic goals. The assessment is received by the Directors, management and staff enabling informed and appropriate changes to ensure the organisation continues working towards achieving its evolving strategies.

Total eye screenings	<b>447,919</b>
Total eye examinations	<b>279,007</b>
Spectacles and devices dispensed	<b>75,033</b>
Low vision examinations	<b>5755</b>
Total personnel trained	<b>1888</b>
Optometry graduates	<b>142</b>
Total optometry graduates	<b>119</b>



# The Challenge

## Myopia (short-sightedness)

**2 billion**  
people with myopia  
in 2010

**2.5 billion**  
with myopia  
in 2020<sup>1</sup>



In urban areas of Singapore, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan and Korea

**80-90%**  
of high school graduates  
are myopic<sup>2</sup>



Rise in the prevalence  
of myopia from

**26%**  
to  
**43%**  
among adults  
from 1971-72  
to 1999-2004<sup>3</sup>

## Myopia

significantly increases  
the risk of

**Cataract**

3.3X for myopia >6.00D

**Glaucoma**

14.4X for myopia >6.00D

**Retinal Pathology**

7.8X for myopia >8.00D<sup>4</sup>

## Myopic macular degeneration

is the number one cause  
of blindness in Shanghai,  
China and Tajimi, Japan

**6 to 22%**  
of blindness  
in various countries  
is due to myopia<sup>5</sup>

## Presbyopia (ageing eyes)

**1040 million**  
people with presbyopia in 2005<sup>6</sup>



**Quality of life impact**  
of uncorrected near vision impairment  
(presbyopia) similar to uncorrected  
distance vision impairment<sup>7</sup>

## Uncorrected refractive error

**625 million people 2014<sup>8</sup>**

**517 million people**  
with **uncorrected near** vision impairment  
(presbyopia) and

**108 million people**  
with **uncorrected distance**  
vision impairment<sup>9</sup>



Total annual economic cost  
of vision loss in Australia  
is estimated to be

**\$27.6 billion**

or

**\$46,950**  
per person

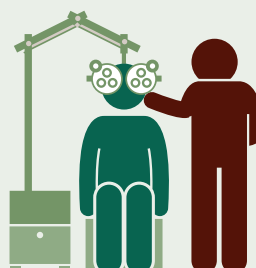
with vision loss aged over 40<sup>11</sup>

## Deficit of eye care practitioners worldwide

**47,000**

functional clinical eye care providers  
**needed globally**

to assess vision and eye health and prescribe  
corrective lenses needed to restore good vision<sup>12</sup>



**18,000**

optical dispensers  
**needed globally**

to provide appropriate glasses<sup>13</sup>





*Sarah, BHF Optometrist with a young eye care patient from Mapuru, Arnhem Land, NT.*

## The Australia Program

The Australian Program team has settled into its new operating environment. Despite ongoing COVID-19 disruptions, the Foundation provided optometry clinics to urban, rural and remote communities, conducting over 9000 eye examinations between July 2020 and June 2021.

The Foundation provides visiting optometry services to approximately 140 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and refugee/migrant communities working in partnership to deliver comprehensive eye health services. Over the past six years the Foundation has provided just over 56,000 individual eye examinations and over 47,000 pairs of glasses to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people including referral to specialist services.

We are pleased to welcome Shahnaz to the Foundation team, our first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Optometry Scholarship recipient. Shahnaz is a second-year optometry student at Deakin university, and this scholarship will cover textbooks, equipment and transport. She is extremely happy and grateful for this amazing opportunity. The first meeting with Shahnaz was over Zoom to connect Shahnaz with the IAHA and Foundation team. This team will work with Shahnaz to mentor and support her through her studies. We hope to welcome many more recipients to this program.



The Foundation is extremely excited about two new projects: **Kids NT** has emerged as a vital component of the Foundation this year to improve the early identification and management of vision problems in all children in the NT. Our research has found:

- Potentially 1 in 3 kids have an uncorrected vision condition
- Visual acuity is not currently being routinely assessed in kids in the NT
- Existing NT detection programs need to be better targeted

Vision impairment and eye conditions can negatively impact upon a child's quality of life, confidence and self-esteem. Correcting avoidable vision impairment and early detection of eye conditions for treatment is essential to provide children with their best start in life. Kids NT is working on tools to leverage NT resources to support children's vision effectively and efficiently, and in turn, unlock childhood potential. The Foundation will support the entire pathway of care, and readily provide practical, cost-effective solutions to prevent the most common cause of

vision impairment in children, uncorrected refractive error.

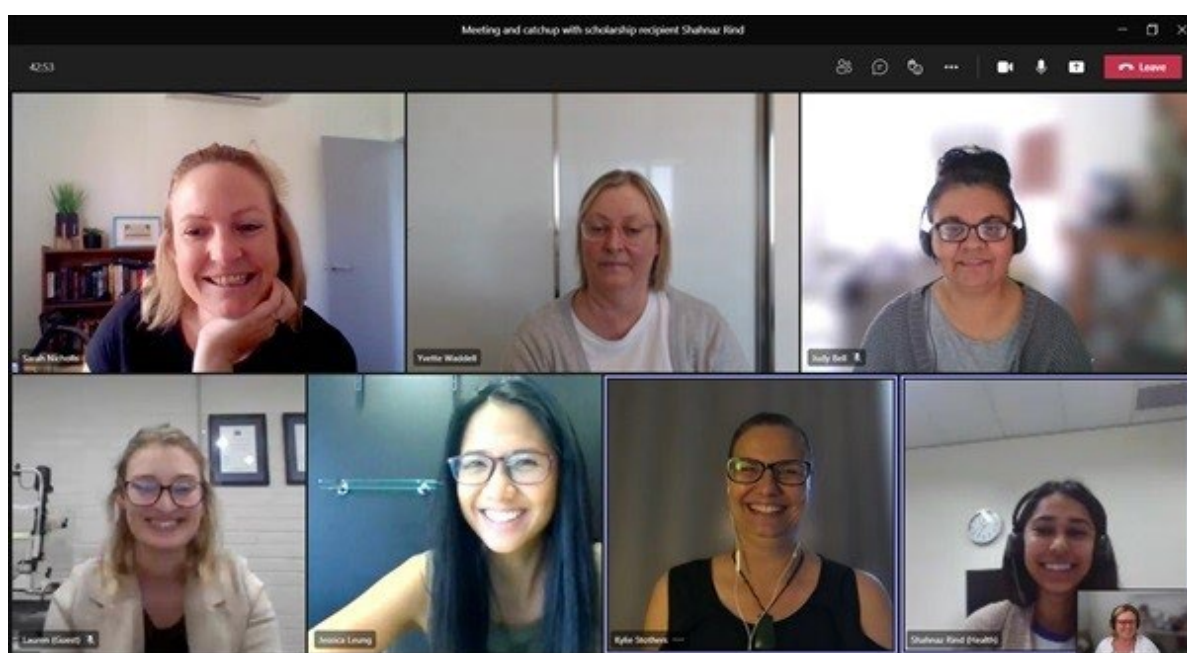
The Foundation is also a core partner in the **Australian Eye and Ear Health Survey**. The Centre for Vision Research at The Westmead Institute for Medical Research (WIMR) and partners including the University of New South Wales, The George Institute for Global Health, the Brien Holden Foundation and Macquarie University are proud to announce the award of the tender to conduct this survey with an added Ear Health component as part of this nationwide survey. The Foundation will be recruiting an Aboriginal Project Officer who will lead community engagement during this project. This survey will examine close to 1,750 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and 3,250 non-Aboriginal Australians over a period of two years.

Reporting from the Australian Eye and Ear Health Survey will contribute to Australia's commitment to eradicate avoidable blindness in fulfilment of the United Nation's General Assembly Resolution Vision for Everyone: accelerating action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals; and Integrated

people-centred eye care, including preventable vision impairment and blindness, adopted by World Health Organisation Member States. The survey will also fulfil several of the key priorities and actions outlined in Australia's Roadmap for Hearing Health.

*"For generations Aboriginal people in Australia were known for exceptional eyesight across the globe. However, over the years the impact of inequitable access to services, underlying chronic conditions and systematic racism has increased the risk of developing vision impairment. To address these outcomes, there is a need to have appropriate systems in place which support the community. This includes but is not limited to: culturally responsive and appropriate care alongside a person centred treatment plans. Therefore I am delighted to have this scholarship so that I can contribute to the much needed service of Optometry."*

Shahnaz Rind.



Zoom meeting with Shahnaz Rind, the first BHF scholarship recipient.



Sarah, BHF Optometrist with a young patient Romeo in Mapuru Homelands.



Sarah and Colina enroute to Minjilang clinic November 2020.

## Aboriginal Vision Program

After the initial COVID shutdown in early 2020, we were able to re-commence our Visiting Optometry Scheme (VOS) clinics to the Aboriginal Communities in the NT and NSW in July 2020. The Foundation fared very well throughout the pandemic, and we made it through most of the financial year without any interruptions to clinics by COVID-19, except a few clinics in late June 2021 due to the Northern Territory's first snap lockdown. In the NT the Foundation provided 470 clinic days, performing 3941 eye examinations. 85% of our patients identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, 45% were diabetic and 71% were provided spectacles. 493 referrals were provided to ophthalmology services.

In NSW the Foundation provided 578 clinics across NSW varying from one day to one week, providing 5025 eye examinations. 94% of our patients identified as Aboriginal, 30% were diagnosed diabetics and 67.5% were provided spectacles either through the NSW Government Spectacle Scheme or the Foundation Low-Cost Spectacle Scheme issuing some 4386 pairs of glasses across NSW. Approximately 13% were referred on to other specialists including Ophthalmology. An interesting aspect of the NSW program is the number of primary and high school children seen in our clinics: during this year we provided approximately 1,110 full eye examinations and approximately 45% required glasses. We continue to work in great partnership with our regional eye health coordinators in NSW and the NT who are the most important link to a successful clinic in community. Thank you.

One of our more memorable NT trips of the year, was when Sarah and Annie visited the Marthakal Homelands in East Arnhem Land. Along with the local Marthakal Homelands Health Service, we visited a number of remote homeland schools, providing comprehensive eye tests to all



children living in these very remote locations, including free glasses for those children who needed them. It involved days of flying over beautiful islands in tiny four-seater planes or driving in 4WD troopy vehicles. It was an adventure we will never forget, topped off by sharing freshly caught mudcrabs whilst performing eye examinations under the mango tree.

In November 2020, we commenced supporting clinics with Deadly Enterprises' Deadly Vision Centre by providing an optometrist for their clinic days in Darwin. Deadly Enterprises is Australia's first Aboriginal owned vision centre. We were also a gold sponsor at the inaugural Deadly Cup in November 2020 – a football event aimed at promoting good health, with a focus on eye health.

Alongside our clinics, we continued to provide education sessions to primary health care staff across the NT. This included a day of training at the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education for Aboriginal Health Practitioner trainees, a diabetes workshop with NT Health nurses and a session with Aboriginal high school students at the Indigenous Allied Health Academy.

Primary Eye Care training was provided in partnership with the Western NSW Eye Health Partnership and the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research

Council (AH&MRC) in Dubbo, Orange, Worrigeer and Sydney with participants attending from across NSW, learning about basic eye screening techniques such as visual acuity, case history, and using the Amsler grid. As well as common eye diseases, vision loss and the impact on the patient, the training covered eye health worker skills such as measuring PD-Pupillary distance, BF-Bifocal Height and co-ordinating clinics, creating an eye care referral pathway.

Some staff also participated in the Indigenous Eye Health conference in April 2021. The conference, although held virtually, provided a great couple of days of networking with other colleagues across the country. Sarah also presented a tabletop presentation on our partnerships in the NT.

In July 2020, the Foundation established an office in Alice Springs and then in January 2021, we moved into our own new office space in Darwin. The new space allows much more room for our expanding team to base themselves at when not out in community. At the same time, we had two new full-time optometrists, Lien and Jessica, joined the Brien Holden Foundation family in Darwin.



*Eye tests under the mango tree in Nyinykay Homelands June 2021.*



*BHF Darwin Office Team, Annie, Lien, Sarah, Jessica and Cassandra.*



Amanda (Central Australia Outreach Optometry Coordinator) with patient Anthony, trying his new reading glasses in Yuendumu.

We also had Cassandra join us in December 2020 as an administration assistant. Cassandra has become a fantastic asset to our team and has taken ownership of our BHF Spectacle Program. The NSW program welcomed Natalie. Natalie's role at the Foundation is Aboriginal Outreach Optometry Coordinator and assists with clinics in our Western NSW region where there is not a designated Eye Health Worker.

Throughout 2020, we started to expand the NSW low-cost spectacle program into the NT. It took many months to receive all the necessary authorisations to allow maximum flexibility in payment methods and accessibility for our remote community patients, but finally in August 2020, we were able to start supplying our own range of glasses to patients in all our VOS clinics, instead of using a third party. This has allowed the Foundation to better manage the supply and order of glasses, along with support to our remote communities. We managed to achieve an approximate 40% reduction in price of spectacles from the previous supplier which has been well received by our patients, partners, and staff.

In early 2021, we also started working more closely with the ophthalmology team at Royal Darwin Hospital to develop some strategies to work towards closing the gap for vision in the Northern Territory. We have enjoyed working closely with the ophthalmology team and continue to strengthen this relationship.

The Foundation has also continued its participation in the regional working groups for eye health in the NT, the Central Australia Barkly and Top End Integrated Eye Health Strategy groups and the Trachoma working group. In NSW the Foundation is an active member in the NSW/ACT State-wide Aboriginal Eye Health Advisory Group and the Western NSW Eye Health Partnership.

## Refugee Programs

The Foundation continues to provide eye health services to refugee health programs across Australia in partnership with International Health and Medical Services (IHMS), NSW Refugee Health Services and Melaleuca Australia providing clinical services, eye health training and assistance to refugee support

services in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, and the Northern Territory. The Foundation has provided 421 eye examinations and approximately 70% of patients received glasses. We are excited to announce that in February 2021 the Foundation commenced services in partnership with VOS, Settlement Services International (Armidale) and Armidale Medical Centre to provide monthly optometry clinics to the Settlement Services International Ezidi community members. The Foundation has recruited a local bi-lingual community member who assists with interpretation during the eye examination and delivery of glasses to community members when they arrive.

Over the five months (February to June) we have provided 101 eye examinations and 60.4% required glasses and have been provided via the NSW Government Spectacle program. This clinic provides a vital lifeline to the Ezidi community, and it is hoped that as this service is now established and operational, this will be a service that all new arrivals to Armidale will be able to access immediately upon their coming to Armidale, ensuring that there is as little delay in accessing these essential services.



SSI clinic Armidale, BHF locum Optometrist Albert and BHF Eye Health Worker Khalid.



We are fortunate to be part of the refugee health programs partnering with Melaleuca refugee centre, now named Melaleuca Australia, in Darwin Northern Territory. With the ongoing pandemic, the number of new arrivals into Darwin was essentially halted. However, this gave us an opportunity to focus on previous refugee patients who were due for their recalls and offering eyecare opportunity for new patients at STEPS education and training, a local English program who works closely with Melaleuca Australia. Fortunately, we were also able to provide a service to a family of four who had arrived and quarantined from Myanmar. 100% of new refugee arrivals to Darwin receive a comprehensive eye examination as part of their health screenings on arrival in Australia. We conducted 75 eye tests and dispensed 39 pairs of spectacles. Of these eye tests, 37 were from students at St Johns college.

The Foundation were fortunate enough to receive a donation aimed at funding eye care for

children and students. This allowed us to carry out eye tests and prescribe spectacles needed for St Johns College's international students. These students are from places such as Congo, East Timor and West Papua: they are often in Australia on scholarships and separated from family or are from families with low incomes. One of our optometrists, Jess, conducted three clinic days seeing 37 students and prescribing 11 spectacles and/or eye exercises. Most of these students had never received an eye test before and had eye problems which could hinder their learning abilities.

***"Brien Holden Foundation, particularly the eye clinic, is to be congratulated on its work in providing aid to students from the remote areas of Papua, Indonesia, who otherwise would not be able to afford regular eye checks.", says St Johns International Coordinator, Ann Tan. "The Foundation has created an excellent bridge in cultural understanding between Australia and Indonesia."***



Eye testing the students at St Johns College.



Jess with the students at St Johns College collecting their spectacles.



BHF Optometrist Lien with Deadly Vision Centre patient using a slit lamp provided through the PEHET project

## Provision of Eye Health Equipment and Training Project (PEHET)

The Australian Government funds the national PEHET program providing eye health testing equipment (Retinal Cameras [166] and Slit Lamps [133]), training, and support for the health service practitioners across Australia. The Consortium provides training to Primary Health Care Workers. The Foundation co-ordinates the program supported by the Australian Government Department of Health and co-leads the program with The Australian College of Optometry through a consortium approach. The consortium includes the Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia (AHCSA), the Centre for Eye Health (CFEH) and Optometry Australia (OA).

As of 30 June 2021, the Consortium had provided training to 150 primary health care sites across Australia, training 971 Primary Health Care Workers to embed retinal photography into primary health care processes.

This included General Practitioners, Aboriginal Health Practitioners/Workers, Nurses, Diabetic Educators, and other staff to build capacity for ongoing up-skilling and local knowledge about eye disease due to diabetes, the role of retinal photography, triage retinal photos in order to refer for further treatment by an Optometrist or Ophthalmologist.

This represents an additional 10 sites trained this year, as well as 182 additional staff trained: a truly exceptional effort given the challenges of regional travel with COVID restrictions.

The consortium also provided online "Diabetic Retinopathy Assessment" training to 169 trainees Australia-wide through the Centre for Eye Health's education arm. This course aims to expand upon some of the information provided during the Retinal Camera training, with a view to providing trainees with the necessary skills to assess and grade diabetic retinopathy within a screening setting.

## Slit Lamp Rollout

The consortium has also been responsible for the rollout of 133 new slit lamps nationwide. This has been a mammoth effort to coordinate involving purchase, delivery and setup of the slit lamps with our equipment partners. The slit lamps will be used by staff in primary healthcare for anterior eye screening, as well as visiting services such as Optometry and Ophthalmology.



Primary Health Care Worker using a retinal camera in Mount Isa, Queensland, Australia.



## Training

In the year to July 2021 the consortium has also worked to develop and consolidate several online training courses, and materials in preparation for the completion of the project; in order to ensure sustainability of training in the future on completion of the project.

These courses include:

### Course 1: Retinal Camera Online Training for Primary Healthcare Workers

This online course aims to provide primary health care workers with the tools to assess vision (visual acuity) and discuss diabetic eye disease with patients, assisted by retinal photographs.

### Course 2: Diabetic Retinopathy Assessment

This course by the Centre for Eye Health, aims to provide trainees with the knowledge and confidence to interpret retinal images and to appropriately manage their diabetic patients.

### Course 3: Slit Lamp Online Training for Primary Healthcare Workers

The online slit lamp course aims to provide primary health care workers with the basic tools to set up a patient on the slit lamp and perform a basic slit lamp examination to provide a functioning eye health screening service.

## Embedding

The PEHET project “Toolkit” was also designed and finalised. The toolkit is a culmination of months of collaboration to combine the consortium’s resources developed over the lifespan of the project. The toolkit contains comprehensive information on:

- Medicare billing
- Measuring visual acuity
- Using the retinal camera and uploading scans to practice management software

- Triaging and educating patients
- Suggestions to implement retinal screening in practice

The toolkit has been printed and prepared as a binder with removable leaflets that will be posted out during 2021. The toolkit has been designed to provide ongoing education and access to resources at sites with a retinal camera.



*Shaun, Aboriginal Health Practitioner, using the PEHET toolkit resources to access training materials*



*Primary Health Care Workers being trained to use a retinal camera.*



World Sight Day celebrations in Pakistan.

## International Programs

The International Program is governed by the Foundation's accreditation with the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and part of the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP). As a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) the Foundation adheres to both the ACFID Code of Conduct and DFAT compliances which define rigorous procedures, standards of governance, management and accountability of project activities for non-government development organisations.

The International Program has active programs in South-East Asia, the Pacific, Africa and Caribbean Regions, delivering service delivery, education and training, research and social enterprise projects which are implemented collaboratively by the Foundation and its partners. Our funding is provided by DFAT and public and private organisations and partners. The International Program has been running since 1999 and has delivered projects in more than 60 countries during the 22 years of operations.

This year the International Program implemented in partnership eye health care service delivery and workforce training in Vietnam, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Papua New Guinea, Eritrea, Kenya, Malawi and Mozambique. The Foundation continues to work closely with Optometry Giving Sight to deliver three projects in Vietnam, Haiti and Tanzania. Equally, the Foundation continued its developmental and research focus by continuing to implement the three Lion Clubs International Foundation projects, one development-focused in Papua New Guinea, and the other two with active research field studies in Vietnam, Pakistan, Tanzania and Malawi.



## Our continued response to COVID-19

Collaboratively working with our committed partners during the reporting period, we continued our measured response to COVID-19 and focused on assisting recovery where possible. The measures we employed aimed to join our government partner's efforts to reduce the spread of the corona virus by helping to inform and increase awareness in the populations of the communities we support. In many countries we continued to deliver eye health care services when and where possible, also transitioning to changed or blended models and reaching to technical innovations to assist outcomes where opportunities arose.

We continued delivering Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) funded Pivot Projects in Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Papua New Guinea joining hands with country level supportive services to aid reaching the less reachable and disadvantaged populations. Systemic losses of income on a global scale coupled with slow to start vaccination programs, exacerbated in-country conditions

to levels we had not seen during the previous reporting year of 2019. Caring for our employees, partners and stakeholders at each project site was our primary concern as we continued into unprecedented and dire conditions in many locations.

In Pakistan, we supported our partner in their request and implemented an Early Recovery Project. We worked collaboratively to provide personal protection to front line aid workers through provision of consumables, reaching more than 80 health facilities including Basic Health Units and Rural Health Centres in Sindh. Our Pakistan Team also worked to ensure the distribution of Safety and Hygiene Kits in difficult conditions across underserved urban and rural districts. In addition, working with local government driven by request, the Pakistan Team assisted in facilitating vaccination awareness information sessions with hand out materials in local languages to increase uptake in rural villages surrounding Islamabad.

In Sri Lanka, building on the relief and response work previously undertaken and fuelled by further requests from local government

dry ratio pack distribution continued. New and established partnership facilitated 1800 ration packs across low-income communities reaching 2575 families with disadvantaged circumstances including disability, income loss, single parents, blind or severe vision impairment. Further work at district levels in Gampaha and Ragama achieved support for distribution of personal protection equipment and health promotion materials via social media and radio. Safety and Hygiene Kits were distributed to COVID affected patients in local hospitals.

In Papua New Guinea work continued to support local partners, district and regional health authorities enabling the health services to continue operating safely and deliver care to 1694 people during the period. This included Port Moresby General Hospital and the Lions Eye Health Resource Centre. Community outreach activities focused on awareness raising on precautionary measures, pro vaccination and COVID fact sheets from World Health Organization which were translated in Tok Pisin for local dissemination and uptake.



COVID-19 Early Recovery Project. Distribution of Hygiene kits to underprivileged families in Sindh.

## Research Outcomes

Research and evaluation guide the program work we deliver. Two research projects are currently underway funded jointly by Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) and DFAT. One study is near completion and has focused on the *Effectiveness of teacher-led school-based eye health programs in Tanzania and Vietnam*, building on work conducted in one similar location by our researchers 10 years ago in 2011, and one new location. Returning a decade on to Vietnam in the province of Ba Ria-Vung Tau, we feel privileged to have an opportunity to revise and undertake further analysis on similar studies to indicate longitudinal results.

The research objectives included: Identifying which schools are still implementing the teacher-led school-based eye health programs; assessing the accuracy of the trained teachers who have been performing eye health and vision screening in children; identifying the changes, including prevalence of refractive error and myopia, since the original teacher-led school-based eye health program implementations; determine the key factors that inhibited or enabled effectiveness of teacher-led school-based eye health programs; and obtaining the local stakeholders' recommendations for effective implementation of teacher-led school-based eye health programs. Preliminary results are informed in the tables (featured on the right of this column) identified by country.

The second research project has field study teams operating in three countries: Pakistan, Malawi and Vietnam. The two-year project has completed the ethics approvals in all study countries including Australia as the project lead. Field research studies has recently begun in a staggered approach moving through the three countries, observing COVID levels and precautions, access to communities and government rulings. The study aims to 'develop

and field test a protocol, including questionnaire, to assess prevalence of main causes of ocular morbidity and vision loss in a representative sample of all-ages of a population'.

The study will also explore 'how to 'operationalize' the ocular morbidity protocol, by determining appropriate sample sizes, approximate costs and resources required.'

The research study is on track to complete in October 2022. Brien Holden Foundation is grateful for the long-term support LCIF and DFAT have shown towards eye health care research outcomes.



A school girl in Vietnam participates in the field study stage of a research project .

### Vietnam

Key Recommendations / Findings	Comments and actions taken/to be taken
50% schools still have teachers trained during original project 2011-2013. 48% schools conducted vision screening in the last 2 years	More teachers to be trained and vision screening to be made an annual event
Teachers' accuracy in detecting children with vision impairment is reasonable (sensitivity above 80%) but this has slightly reduced compared to 2011	Refresher training should occur every 2 years
About 6% increase in refractive error (myopia) prevalence compared to 2011 study data	Eye health promotion and myopia control strategies to be placed in the schools perennially
Vision screening by teachers and the effectiveness of this approach on reducing vision impairment has been widely acknowledged by all the stakeholders including children, parents, teachers, principals and related organisations.	The project could/should be expanded in other districts and provinces

### Tanzania

Key Recommendations / Findings	Comments and actions taken/to be taken
48% schools still have teachers trained during original project 2011-2013. 37% schools conducted vision screening in the last 2 years	More teachers to be trained and vision screening to be made an annual event
Teachers' accuracy in detecting children with vision impairment is poor (sensitivity below 20%)	Training for teachers using a standard protocol for vision screening should be immediately organised
4% increase in refractive error (myopia) prevalence compared to 2001 study data from same region	Eye health promotion and myopia control strategies to be placed in the schools
Vision screening by teachers and the effectiveness of this approach on reducing vision impairment has been widely acknowledged by all the stakeholders including children, parents, teachers and principals and highlighted the need for frequent vision screening in the schools.	A new project could/should be instigated and expanded in other districts and provinces



## Papua New Guinea

Working collaboratively with our local partners, our program achieved the completion of the 3-year (2018-2021 Phase II) Eye Health Systems Strengthening Project funded by Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) with contribution from Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), through the Australian Non-government Cooperation Program who funded the PNG Eye Care Development Project. Implemented in parallel, the two projects have supported good mid- and long-term outcomes against the strategic program objectives.

The primary aim of the Phase II LCIF Eye Health Systems Strengthening Project was to develop eye health care services in Papua New Guinea, building on those offered by the Lions National Resource Centre for Eye Health (Phase I, 2016-2018) at the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG), School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

Project objectives included: Refurbish and equip the eye clinic at Port Moresby General Hospital (PMGH); develop a low vision and paediatric clinic linked with PMGH and the National Resource Centre for eye health; develop a low vision network in PNG aligned with PNG's National Eye Health Care Plan; conduct eye health promotion and awareness raising to promote service development, national awareness of eye health care and the national plan; monitoring and evaluating project and country level outputs and outcomes.

During the three years of the project 37,334 people received eye health care consultations at PMGH Eye Clinic, of which: 1,350 cataract surgeries; 1,117 paediatric consultations; 1,006 low vision consultations; 343 diabetic retinopathy treatments; 148 low vision patients with disability were treated during eight low vision outreach clinics supported by PMGH. Female (adult and child) presentation rate compared with



*Dr Jambi Garap, ophthalmologist and Chair of the Prevention of Blindness Committee with co-workers outside the Lions National Resource Centre in PNG.*



*A young boy in PNG is having his eyes examined for the first time.*

male presentation was seen to be an inequitable 30%. Cataract surgical treatment to females had slightly improved over the project from 35% and 37%.

Throughout the implementation period of the LCIF project, our partner PNG Eye Care's Vision Centre provided 5,928 people

with safe conditions to received eye health care. Overall female presentation was 57% and overall child presentation was 2%. This rate is consistent with the research the Foundation conducted through a USAID project that demonstrated an approx. 2% refractive error prevalence in PNG children.

Between March 2020 and June 2021, female presentation dropped to 50% and is slowly recovering and sitting at 53% female. Spectacle uptake has consistently been 60% female – even throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Noting the difference in the gender presentation rates between PMGH and PNG Eye Care Vision Centre, it shows some progress towards greater gender equity in the uptake of eye health care service provision.

During this year, the PNG Development Project conducted 1663 eye examinations of which 54% were female, 70 were driver's license exams, and 743 spectacles were dispensed. This is a 20% drop in the previous year's eye examinations reflecting the impact of restrictions on movement of people and reduced access to the hospital eye clinics unless for emergency services. However, there was an 40% increase in spectacle sales. A small increase in female presentation was also seen in 2021 compared to the previous drop in female presentation demonstrated in 2020, although it has not returned to pre-COVID levels of 60% female presentation.

The DFAT Development Project has also enabled workforce development training the following cadres supporting: Two female ophthalmologists to graduate; three new female refractionists to be trained; three new female optical technicians to be trained; 12 primary health care workers to be trained in primary eye care and near spectacles provision; four provincial ophthalmologists upskilled in low vision service provision and assessment; 10 ophthalmic nurses upskilled in low vision service provision and assessment; and, enabled four community-based rehabilitation workers and special education teachers to be trained in the vision impairment referral pathway.



Dr Mangot graduating as one of the two new female ophthalmologists; her colleague smiling on the right is the other.

### Words from the people

Local news from the concluding joint Lions and DFAT project is two female ophthalmologists have graduated. One has taken a vacant position in East New Britain Island in Rabaul. The other assumed the challenge of the increasing paediatric cases in PNG and has remained in Port Moresby as a sub-specialty paediatric ophthalmologist. There are two more ophthalmologists graduating soon and three scheduled to graduate in 2022. The continuing partnerships and project work by the Foundation interest to specialise in ophthalmology has increased. Additional workforce include three female refractionists and three optical technicians being trained by PNG Eye Care through ANCP funding.

All outreach activities were halted between April and October 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and following government regulations. Two COVID-19 hygiene community awareness activities were undertaken, and two 2-day adapted eye health awareness activities were undertaken for World Sight Day (October 2020) and International Day for Persons with Disability (December 2020). Three outreach trips for low vision service provision were undertaken in November and December 2020 and a further five were managed in February, May and June 2021 working around lockdown and movement restrictions, fulfilling and completing the 3-year LCIF Project. A no-cost extension was negotiated with LCIF from December 2020 to June 2021.



Participants leading the disability inclusive evaluation at the Lion National Resource Centre in Port Moresby, PNG.





3rd and 4th year Vietnamese optometry students practice their new skills at the PRETC.

## Vietnam

Our Vietnam Program aims to improve eye health of the population by increasing access to comprehensive service provision. During this year, the child eye health project supported by DFAT and the ANCP Program, continued with planned school screening activities in the south of Vietnam in Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province (BRVT) where the COVID19 rate was initially low. A total of 4,191 school children were screened at six primary and lower secondary schools, 424 free spectacles were provided to the disadvantaged children and 289 referrals were made to the BRVT Provincial Eye Hospital for further treatment..

The Optometry Development Project at Hanoi Medical University (HMU) and at University of Medicine Pham Ngoc Thach (UPNT) was implemented collaboratively working with our government partners with support from the Foundation. Working closely with UPNT and HMU the Foundation provides guidance to the optometry education project through regular quarterly workshops and meetings. Assistance follows international expertise and lecturing of the optometry curriculum, advice on the academic timetable, allocation of teachers for relevant teaching subjects, equipment purchase, teaching plans, textbooks and course preparation.

During this reporting period, 70 optometrists graduated from UPNT and HMU and it was recorded that there are 344 students currently studying at HMU and UPNT from Year 1 to Year 4. Due to COVID-19, the optometry curriculum was delivered by the international lecturers through an online delivery model working from distance with increase support from the two Universities' administrators.

Landmark progress was made by the continuing advocacy for the finalisation of the Optometrist's Job Code to be fully recognised by the Government of Vietnam.



### Words from the people

*Ms. Van Anh is one of the first Vietnamese-trained optometrists to graduate from Hanoi Medical University (HMU) which opened in 2015. She has chosen to become a Teaching Assistant for the optometry sub-department of HMU where she will assist in teaching theory and practice, work at the Academic Vision Centres, participate in screening programs and improve community health. "Becoming a lecturer is my dream as I love assisting others to understand how important good vision is. I enjoy teaching and mentoring the students about the difficulties they are facing in learning the course. I share my own experience of being a first optometrist for my country. Every time you teach, you are cultivating and expanding your own knowledge as well as the person you are teaching," said Van Anh.*

The Vietnamese Team continued to work closely with Health Strategy and Policy Institute (HSPI) Ministry of Health (MoH), and other NGOs including Fred Hollows Foundation, Eye Care Foundation, and other partners. The required documents were reviewed by HMU and UPNT as part of the Circular defining the scope of practices and job descriptions for optometrists. They were submitted to MOH at the end of November 2020. The Circular was reviewed by MoH and sent to various ministries including Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labour and others to get their comments and inputs for the Circular defining Optometrist's job code.

This process has taken nearly a decade to complete and this anticipated final outcome is testament to the strong partnerships made with both Government and private partners in Vietnam. The Optometrist's Job Code will allow new policy structure and enable employment pathways to be created integrating the emerging profession into the public health system to achieve sustainability for optometry.

With 70 new Vietnamese-trained optometrists graduating within the reporting period, the 2021 national total of optometrist in Vietnam is 182. In 2013 there were only 3 overseas-trained optometrists in total in Vietnam to service the population of 93 million. In 2021, due to the collaborative achievements the Foundation has made working alongside its dedicated partners, there are more than 500 new optometrists training or working to provide eye health care in Vietnam.

The three Foundation established Academic Vision Centres (AVC's) one at UPNT and two at HMU continued delivering services to reduced numbers coming through-the-door. Equally, the AVC's provided training to optometry students and build an additional eye health care pathway. There was a total of 19,688 people who



*A young school child having their eyes examined during a school screening activity.*

received eye health care at one or more of the AVCs with 2,676 spectacles dispensed.

In the third quarter, the planned school screening project was conducted by the optometry students and teachers at HMU. Outcomes included servicing four lower secondary schools in Hanoi enabling 4,225 school children screened and 394 spectacles provided to poor children in Hanoi. UPNT was unable to provide the screening services planned due to the severity of the COVID19 outbreak and stringent lockdown measures by the Government.

The Paediatric Refractive Error Training Centre (PRETC) project which is established under the HMU's hospital working to integrate the administrative and financial systems to become part of the HMU's hospital governance. The PRETC has been managed according to the public health system and provides services, working on a cost recovery mechanism to generate income and achieve sustainability. During this period, the following activities were implemented by the eye

health care professionals working at PRETC including optometrists, ophthalmologists and 3rd and 4th year optometry students of HMU.

During the reporting period the PRETC provided eye health care services to 3717 people with a 62% gender split towards female. In addition, the centre provides workforce development opportunity for clinical training of 12 third-year and fourth-year optometry students. Due to the rise of COVID19 outbreak within much of Vietnam, the planned refresher sub-speciality training course in paediatric refraction and child eye health care was designed and conducted online. The trainer delivered the course to 25 educators and teaching assistants from UPNT and HMU during August and September 2020, following the trainer-the-trainer capacity building model.



## Pakistan

The Pakistan Program aims to improve access to inclusive and sustainable eye health care. During the reporting period the program provided services to 331,403 people in Pakistan, of which 158,585 were women and girls, and 16,507 were people with disability.

The Social Enterprise Optical Shops (SEOS), a project initiated in 2016, provides a good example of program growth and sustainability. Our Pakistan Team implemented this project in partnership with Layton Rahmatulla Benevolent Trust (LRBT), the largest eye care NGO in Pakistan. The Foundation agreed to develop optical services within LRBT hospitals by contributing the technical, training and financial support. LRBT contributes through providing human resources, premises within the hospitals and goodwill of patients' referral to the optical shops.

Due to the success of the SEOS model during 2020, the partnership established two more optical shops in LRBT hospitals funded by the revenue of the project. The project also supported LRBT to provide low vision devices to patients from underprivileged communities, enabling not only sustainability and expansion but also strengthening low vision service provision.

Over the years, our Pakistan Team has established a robust system to manage and monitor the optical shops in remote areas of the country. The country team now manages six optical shops in three provinces of Pakistan.

The Foundation implemented a project to develop low vision services in Pakistan in partnership with the College of Ophthalmology and Allied Vision Sciences (COAVS). The project started in July 2015 and ended in June 2021. The project had two main

components: Enhancing the technical skills of optometrists in clinical and functional low vision management; and setting up low vision clinics at secondary level hospitals through providing assessment material, inventory and furniture and fixtures. Our Pakistan Team localised this project by handing it over to the partner on completion. To sustain the training component, the master training kit was also handed over to COAVS. The partner's faculty will continue the training by integrating these resources.

During 2020, our Pakistan Team discussed with LRBT the prospect of localising the low vision training which had been provided regularly since 2015. LRBT were willing and together we developed a plan to hand over the training component to the partner. One component was the master training kit and the other was nominating two faculty members to be trained as master trainers. During the year, our Pakistan Team supported 5-days training on clinical and functional low vision management at the LRBT training centre. One master trainer from the Foundation and two co-trainers from LRBT moderated this training. Following the localisation model one more training will be arranged by the Pakistan Team where LRBT trainers will take the lead and the Foundation's trainer will co-facilitate and observe.

Working to develop and increase the eye health care workforce, collaboratively we contributed to enhancing the knowledge and skills of 320 teachers through a Government training project in child eye health and vision screening. These trained teachers conducted vision screening at school and community level have provided vision screening services to 27,679 students during the reporting year and 1,272 spectacles were also dispensed to the children and their teachers. The local governments involved were Comprehensive Eye Care Cell



*School teachers in Pakistan receive training on safeguarding and protection of children.*

in Azad, Jammu and Kashmir and Sindh Institute of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences (SIOVS).

The Academic Vision Centre established at Isra School of Optometry continued providing the opportunity to the optometry students to learn and enhance their clinical practice skills. During the year, 85 optometry students, of which 68 were girls, learned about history taking, slit-lamp examination, paediatric and subjective refraction.

Vision Trust, one of the Foundation's partners launched an optometry internship program and were assisted by technical support from our Pakistan Team. The technical support was extended to CBM in assessing optometry skills of the newly recruited optometrists, and by designing the training schedule as per the need of each optometrist with disability. CBM initiated an Inclusive Eye Health Project with LRBT Pakistan to provide high-quality eye health services to underprivileged communities of district Rahim Yar Khan. BHF team engaged an external expert to conduct

assessment and skill enhancement activity. Senior management of CBM and LRBT acknowledged the support of the Brien Holden Foundation for capacity building of optometry in Pakistan.

With the intention of further building partner skills to better provide optical services, the Pakistan Team conducted three days of training on spectacle cutting and fitting and optical shop management at SIOVS. The senior optical technician oriented the participants on optical lab equipment and conducted practical and comprehensive sessions on the techniques of optical fitting.

This skill transfer training session helped the SIOVS staff provide quality optical services to the patients who approach SIOVS, and similarly further training provided by the Pakistan Team to the newly recruited staff of optical shop teams at LRBT-BHV Optical Lar and Lahore on spectacle fitting, achieved the same positive outcome.



### Words from the people

*Saeed is a schoolteacher in Lahore suffering from Stargardt disease, an inherited ailment of the retina causing compromised vision. He became unable to meet the educational tasks and targets assigned by the school. Saeed was stressed and believed he was losing his job.*

*Saeed was referred to a low vision clinic established with support of DFAT and the ANCP. The optometrist was trained by the Foundation and she tested and diagnosed his eye disease. "With my low vision devices my life has returned," said Saeed happily. "I have begun to lecture again and I know my working future is secure. It is a big relief to me and my family."*



Child eye health is a key focus of the Foundation and here in Pakistan school teachers training increases local knowledge.



## Sri Lanka

The Foundation's Sri Lanka Program, now localised, aimed to increase equitable access to inclusive and affordable eye health services in Sri Lanka. The program consisted of eye health care services provided by four vision centres across four different districts within the capital city Colombo: Warakapola, Kolonnawa, Wattala and Yatiyanthota. Community engagement through outreach initiatives and school screenings provided further project capacity for reaching those in most need and increasing services uptake at the country level.

During the reporting period, the Program reached 71,599 people in Sri Lanka, of which 36,207 were women and girls and 35,392 were men and boys, and 6444 were people with disability.

The Sri Lanka Team organised outreach initiatives with the support of the key partners in public, private and non-profit sectors. Collaborating with both Colombo-based and international NGO's th initiatives supported eye screenings and follow up eye health care to 2731 people. Four community-led eye health community awareness projects in collaboration with the local partners supporting vulnerable women and children.

An eye care development project providing services for the rural and marginalised communities was implemented by the Sri Lankan Team working collaboratively with



*An elderly woman in Sri Lanka experiences clear near vision with spectacle provision.*

both Government, Ministry of Health (MoH) and NGO partners. Project activities included eye screenings for school-aged children in Mannar, Anuradhapura, Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts. A total of 2753 children's eyes were examined by the MoH staff and local schoolteachers with 1003 spectacles dispensed free of charge.

A community project aiming to deliver improved eye health services for vulnerable children was implemented, determined by local government. The Sri Lanka Team worked collaboratively training 34 schoolteachers in primary vision screening under the supervision of Dimbulagala Zonal education office. The trained teachers were equipped with a training kit and to screen the vulnerable children at their respective schools.

The Sri Lankan Team continued to work with collaboratively to strengthen the low vision services by conducting a needs assessment of selected low vision clinics. The

outcome was purchasing low vision devices to better equip the existing clinics in Trincomalee, Mahiyangana, and Kuliyaipitiya. In addition, low vision training for ophthalmic technologists working in government hospitals was provided.

The Sri Lankan Team initiated a Pivot Project funded by DFAT and working with local government who identified local families in most need affected by the adversities of COVID 19, were provided with essential food parcels. The project was implemented in collaboration with community leaders, community organisations, private and public institutions, encouraging diverse relationships. In total 2903 families received dry ration packs.

As part of the rationalisation of the Foundation's older international programs, a localisation solution was adopted for Sri Lanka Program. This involved the handover of program resources and infrastructure to former staff to set up local NGOs and private practices.



### Words from the people

*Dewadasa walked in to Wattala Vision Centre, supported by DFAT, worried and not knowing what to expect. He had been struggling with his vision for a long while and took his friends advice to seek help. He received a free comprehensive eye examination and was diagnosed with presbyopia and given reading glasses. Dewadasa said, "work has become easier, life has become easier. I am fully satisfied."*

*Due to the care he received, Dewadasa feels unlimited in tasks and like to contribute to. He has been telling many people to visit the vision centre. The vision technician at Wattala Vision Centre, stated with a laugh, "yes, we have received many client recommendations by Dewadasa. He was a very satisfied patient who is now actively promoting our work".*

## Cambodia

The Cambodia Program – now localised - aimed to contribute to the elimination of vision impairment due to uncorrected refractive error in Cambodia through workforce development, increasing access to services, research and advocacy.

During the reporting period, the Program reached 7447 people in Cambodia, of which 3762 were women and girls and 3685 were men and boys, and 707 were people with disability.

This year the program outcomes include the Phnom Penh Vision Centre providing the local communities with sustained access to quality eye health care services. In total 1597 patients received free eye examination and 1,445 patients received affordable spectacle. There were 133 patients referred on to tertiary eye care services, of which 61 were children. Due to outreach initiatives persons with disability, women and underprivileged communities experienced increased access to quality refractive services benefiting 791 people.

The Cambodia Team conducted a monitoring and evaluating trip to assess the National Program for Eye Health (NPEH) in strengthening refraction and dispensing skills in the local workforce. The NPEH enables greater capacity to provide eye health care services and this year 60 refractionists enrolled in the continuing refraction education

workshop and course. It was reported that 41 refractionist nurses from both public and private institutions, that graduated from the National Refraction Training Centre. There were 85 schoolteachers and Ministry of Health staff trained in vision screening to support the school eye health project. The Cambodia Team worked collaboratively with local partners to provide vision screening to 4131 children and 813 spectacles or device were dispensed to the children with vision impairment.

The Cambodia Team continued their advocacy work with the Sub-Sectorial Group responding to the Government of Cambodia request to determine and guide the integrating of child eye health in the national school system. This includes development of the child eye health education curriculum into a series of textbooks for use within the public school system. This is a long-term achievement of great value and impact to the children of Cambodia as from 2022 (completion of the child eye health education curriculum) all will learn the importance of eye health care and good vision, as part of the yearly national curriculum.

As part of the rationalisation of the Foundation's older international programs, a localisation path was followed for Cambodia Program which involved a hand over to a valued partner with an established footprint enabling the program to continue.



### Words from the people

*In Cambodia, the Foundation has worked within the Sub-Sectorial Working Group to advocate to the Government for eye health to be included in the national school health curriculum since 2013. During 2020, this important step for the children of Cambodia succeeded. This is wonderful news for children like Chan. He is a passionate mathematician who dreams of becoming an engineer. When asked about having clear vision, Chan said, "the best thing about my glasses is that I can now read figurework in books and also across the room on the school board... but ALL very clearly!"*



School eye screening activities completed in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.





## Tanzania

The Tanzania Program aims to increase access to eye health services by strengthening existing health systems within two rural districts of the underserved Lake Zone Region in Tanzania. It is funded by Optometry Giving Sight, to which we express our continuing thanks. Working closely and collaboratively with the Ministry of Health (MoH) as our partner, work has begun to rapidly accelerate access to services for more people in more locations within the Simiyu and Mwanza regions, by launching three new eye clinics: The two permanent and one satellite clinics will service the growing populations of Simiyu (1,584,000) and Mwanza (1,120,000) regions that currently have very limited or no access to eye health care services.

Working in partnership with the MoH and the President's Office, Brien Holden Foundation is building on previous collaborative program work done with the National Eye Care Coordinator, Dr Bernadetha Shilio. Partnerships for this project are held with the global funder Optometry Giving Sight and the Tanzanian-born Dr Moes Nasser. The new project is called the Roshanali Nasser Eye Health Project, in memory of Dr Nasser's father, the Late Mee Roshanali Nasser.

The three new eye clinics have been recently launched as fully equipped facilities and are beginning to provide local communities with both optometry and ophthalmological services: For the people this means correction of refractive error, access to spectacles provision, low vision devices, cataract surgeries, treatment of glaucoma and diabetic eye conditions and other ocular treatments.

During the reporting period progress against the identified project outcomes at the new eye clinic at Simiyu Regional Referral Hospital include: Building new structures to establishing the new eye health services as a regional referral centre;

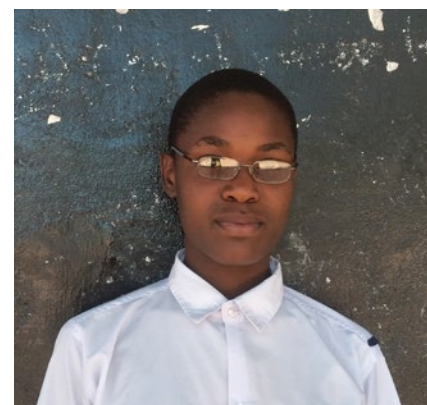


providing and installing clinical, optical lab and surgical equipment; and in addition to providing technical and clinic management training for the eye clinic staff assist in building capacity at country level.

Similar project outcomes have been achieved in the Mwanza Region at the new eye clinic at Kwimba (Ngudu) District Hospital: Expansion of services by equipping the eye department with ophthalmological, refractive and low vision services and an optical lab for cutting, fitting and dispensing spectacles; full time employment for one new optometrist for the hospital, one ophthalmic nurse and the Assistant Medical Officer of Ophthalmology to receive refresher training to increase the knowledge base.

In the rural setting of Nyambiti the satellite eye clinic has been established and project achievements to date include: renovating and equipping the clinic; supporting a regular schedule for the facilitating district eye care team to visit Nyambiti; identifying and scheduling needed outreach services to surrounding rural communities.

The three eye clinics work together to ensure the communities of both districts receive the best of care. Static services will be provided at Simiyu regional hospital and Kwimba District Hospital at the outpatient department (OPD). Cataracts, major and minor surgeries will take place at Simiyu regional hospital while Kwimba District Hospital



will conduct cataract and minor surgeries. Simiyu regional hospital will conduct outreaches to the five nearest district hospitals while Kwimba District Hospital will conduct outreaches to the lower health facilities of the region including Nyambiti Satellite Eye Clinic.

In addition to the increased community level eye health care services the districts school eye health requirements will also be catered for. The project will follow a tried and tested model that Brien Holden Foundation has previously implemented in Tanzania. The School Health Project will adopt 20 schools (primary and secondary) to equip and train 140 teachers to conduct eye screening to identify and refer eye health problems targeting to screen 14,000 school children.

During the project permanent vision corridors will be set up in the 20 adopted schools to enable on-going vision monitoring by the trained teachers.

## Haiti

The aim of the Haiti Program is to reduce avoidable blindness and uncorrected vision impairment in Haiti by increasing access to eye health care services, by developing optometry as a profession and collaboratively establishing an optometry school at the Université d'État d'Haïti

This year tremendous progress has been made in the delivery of the optometry course at Université d'État d'Haïti (UEH) despite the great and many challenges that threatened to derail the project's best-laid plans. The semesters of the academic year and Summer School commenced as scheduled albeit under very tense and uncertain socio-political climates.

The recent violent [M7.2] earthquake complicated by tropical storm Grace [R5.2] also caused psychological trauma among the students and the UEH project management team. A gravely unfortunate event of the President's assassination occurred just three days prior to the start of Summer School. The commendable commitment and resilience of the UEH's project management team and the students enabled the optometry course to continue running without too many disruptions despite the increased civil unrest and insecurity fears that engulf the country.

Summer School was delivered entirely online by the two native French-speaking lecturers who



*Optometry students at Haiti's first optometry school with lecturer Marc Kensen.*

were employed by the project and are based in Canada and Australia respectively. A local optometrist, who is an employee of UEH was engaged by the project to assist with the clinical practicals during Summer School. All Year 2 and Year 3 students completed Summer School covering the optometry modules needed to confidently proceed to their next year of study in October/November 2021 when UEH begins its new academic year.

Drawing on our strong partner relationship with Dr Jean Cadet, Dean of the Medical Faculty and the Project Management Team; which comprises two representatives of the UEH optometry school and two representatives of the Foundation with a further two representatives providing expert knowledge input continued to effectively workshop all challenges and barriers.

Currently UEH has 38 students enrolled across 1st, 2nd and 3rd years. UEH has confirmed at

the start of the new academic year there will be a new 1st year cohort starting. In anticipation of approaching Phase 2 of the Haiti Optometry Development Project partnership, the project has contracted a local bio technician from UEH to compile a full inventory of all existent equipment. This inventory will enable the optometry school and project team to review in light of what is needed for the 4 years of enrolled students to successfully complete the 5-year course.

The Project Management Team continually assesses the project's progress towards achieving objectives set out at the beginning of the project and to be achieved during the scope of project.

The project objectives are: Increase the number of skilled optometrists to deliver quality eye care services to the people of Haiti through the development of optometry, thereby assisting in the decrease of uncorrected vision impairment and avoidable blindness; begin set up of an Academic Vision Centre at UEH to provide optometric care and management training; promote and advocate for the creation of optometry posts within the public sector and the employment of optometrists by the Haitian Ministry of Health to provide eye care services to Haiti's most marginalised communities; and support the UEH to become an optometric training resource for the Caribbean region.



*Third year optometry students in practical action while being taught via online course delivery*





*Optometry students in the Africa Region conducting child eye health examinations*

## Global Optometry Development

The Global Optometry Development Project has been funded by DFAT since 2018 and this year is the last year of funding. The overarching outcome of the project is that all supported schools and countries have locally trained optometrists and/or optometry technicians providing eye health services both in public or private sector. The second overall achievement is the additional services provided to communities by students and new graduates during their internship either at the university, the Academic Vision Centre, and public and private hospitals.

Brien Holden Foundation began working more than a decade ago to establish the optometry profession where it had not previously existed in the Africa Region and in South-East Asia. Today the Foundation has supported and established more than 14 schools in eight countries.

This year the schools in the Africa Region admitted a total of 127 optometry students into Year 1, of which 76 were male and 51 female. We can report 61 new locally trained optometrists graduated during the reporting period.

**Mozambique** Unilurio graduated 15 students, 12 male and 3 female, during the reporting period. The optometry school is well established and mature and

has more than 10 local trained faculty that lecture through the academic year. Celebrations began in confirmation of the long-awaited OCT machine arriving after nine months of delay due to the Covid context. The research academic writing support to faculty has continued at project level and the outcome is two locally focused research papers studying population prevalence rates in Malawi, which are being finalised. Notice has been given to the optometry school and a final report has been prepared to send over to the Head of School, outline the achievements made during the project.

**Malawi** There are two optometry schools supported by DFAT, Mzuzu University, which is degree level and Malawi College of Health Sciences (MCHS) which is diploma level. The schools are mature and established and the courses have progressed well even though both are understaffed, and graduations have halted due to Covid context. The donated equipment and furniture was well received. A Master's financial scholarship support was offered for the main lecturer at the diploma collage. Notice has been given to both the optometry schools and the final reports have been prepared.



**Eritrea** The Foundation supported optometry school at Orotta College has concluded intake of students. After 12 years of supporting the program, a total of 167 optometric personnel have been trained (122 optometry technicians and 45 optometrists). With an estimated population of 4.5 million, this achievement makes Eritrea the first country supported by Brien Holden Foundation not only to meet but exceed the VISION 2020 human resources target for refractionist 1: 50,000 population and 1 optometrists per 250,000 population. According to the WHO Health Workforce recommendations for Africa, Eritrea needs a minimum of 18 optometrists and 90 Optometric technicians.

**Kenya** During the reporting period Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST) graduated 25 new locally trained optometrists, 15 were men and 10 female. The Optometry and Vision Science faculty at MMUST currently runs a 5-year Bachelor of Optometry and Vision Science program after being upgraded from a 4-year course to 5 years in 2016. Over the last ten years, the program has graduated over 150 students. The first cohort of the program graduated in December 2014. Currently, there are 136 students are currently enrolled in course, distributed across years 1-5. Sustainability progress has been made and there are seven local Kenyan clinical instructors (trained within the course), one of whom is currently studying for his PhD in Norway. Notice has been given to the faculty and the final report has been prepared.



## Optometry Workforce Development

Global optometry students currently enrolled

1,510

Total number of global optometry graduates between 2008 and 2021

984



Total of new optometrists training or working

2,494

The impact of these figures is exponential:

**637** optometrists examining  
**8** people a day  
**5** days a week for  
**42** weeks (a year) =

**1,653,120**

Projected amount of more people receiving eye care per year

Many of these students will become first optometrists of their country



## Countries and optometry schools supported by the Global Optometry Development project

<b>Haiti</b>	Université d'État d'Haïti
<b>Malawi</b>	Mzuzu University (Degree) Malawi College of Health and Sciences (Diploma)
<b>Mozambique</b>	Universidade Lurio
<b>Uganda</b>	Makerere University
<b>Kenya</b>	Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology
<b>Vietnam</b>	University of Medicine Pham Ngoc Thach (UPNT), Hanoi Medical University (HNU)
<b>Eritrea</b>	Orotta College of Medicine and Health Sciences

### Words from the people

*Madiha is an optometrist and a faculty member of the optometry school in Lahore. She completed her graduation and started working at the teaching hospital. Madiha was recommended for the Optometry Faculty Development Initiative course supported by DFAT and offered by the Brien Holden Foundation. The course introduced her to the new style of teaching and active learning strategies. She improved her teaching methodologies, and for the first time designed new teaching modules and offered feedback to/from her students for the first time, improving outcomes greatly. Madiha said, "I am very grateful for the expert and innovative instruction. The course helped me change everything about my teaching, for the better," she smiled.*





World Sight Day school eye health celebrations in Mirpur, Pakistan.

## Major Funders and Supporters

Thank you to all our project partners and supporters. Through collaboration we have achieved so much more.

Australian Department of Foreign  
Affairs and Trade, Australian NGO  
Co-operation Program



Brien Holden Vision Institute



Coopervision



Australian  
Department of Health



Australian Government  
Department of Health

Lions Clubs International  
Foundation



Australian Council for  
International Development



AUSTRALIAN  
COUNCIL  
FOR  
INTERNATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT

Optometry Giving Sight



NSW Rural Doctors Network



NSW RURAL DOCTORS NETWORK

Vision 2020 Australia



Northern Territory Government



International Agency for the  
Prevention of Blindness



# Financial summary

Plain language summary of income and expenditure and overall financial health

REVENUE	2021	2020
Donations and gifts		
• Monetary	22,016	85,548
• Non-monetary	-	-
Bequests and Legacies	-	-
Grants		
• Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	2,032,310	1,564,697
• Other Australian Grants	4,387,493	4,345,249
• Overseas Grants	163,573	310,534
Commercial Activities Income	-	-
Investment income	1,274	5,300
Other income		
• ATO Cash flow boost 1	25,000	50,000
• JobKeeper	300,450	126,000
• Other Income	237,372	219,712
Revenue for International Political or Religious Adherence Promotion Programs	-	-
Non Monetary Income	1,275,009	1,470,695
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>8,444,496</b>	<b>8,177,737</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<b>International Aid and Development Programs Expenditure</b>		
International programs		
• Funds to international programs	1,895,809	1,765,308
• Program support costs	774,090	751,468
Community education	50,045	18,203
Fundraising costs		
• Public	-	73,867
• Government, multilateral and private	-	-
Accountability and Administration	483,009	580,432
Non-Monetary Expenditure	1,330,339	1,493,441
<b>Total International Aid and Development Programs Expenditure</b>	<b>4,533,292</b>	<b>4,682,719</b>
International Political or Religious Adherence Promotion Programs Expenditure	-	-
Domestic Programs Expenditure	3,534,924	2,895,487
Commercial Activities Expenditure	-	-
Other Expenditure	236,333	429,086
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>8,304,550</b>	<b>8,007,291</b>
<b>SURPLUS/ (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>139,946</b>	<b>170,446</b>
<b>OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME</b>	<b>139,946</b>	<b>170,446</b>



ASSETS	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Current Assets		
• Cash and cash equivalents	4,270,698	5,237,229
• Trade and other receivables `	298,498	4 67,150
• Inventories	-	55,689
• Assets held for sale	-	-
• Other financial assets	148,795	356,770
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>4,717,991</b>	<b>6,116,838</b>
Non current assets		
• Trade and other receivables	-	-
• Other financial assets	-	-
• Property, plant and equipment	8,375	22,883
• Investment property	-	-
• Right of Use assets non current (Leases)	36,444	94,767
• Intangibles	-	-
• Other non-current assets	-	-
<b>Total Non Current Assets</b>	<b>44,819</b>	<b>117,650</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>4,762,810</b>	<b>6,234,488</b>

LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
• Trade and other payables	730,155	1,045,815
• Borrowings	-	-
• Current tax liabilities	-	-
• Other financial liabilities	-	-
• Lease liability - current	23,236	28,268
• Provisions	127,262	146,571
• Other	2,753,655	3,997,152
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>3,634,308</b>	<b>5,217,806</b>
Non Current Liabilities		
• Borrowings	-	-
• Other financial liabilities	-	-
• Lease liability - non current	14,458	60,172
• Provisions	131,311	113,723
• Other	-	-
<b>Total Non Current Liabilities</b>	<b>145,769</b>	<b>173,895</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>3,780,077</b>	<b>5,391,701</b>

<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>982,733</b>	<b>842,787</b>
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EQUITY		
• Reserves	-	-
• Retained Earnings	982,733	842,787
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>982,733</b>	<b>842,787</b>

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**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT  
TO THE MEMBERS OF  
BRIEN HOLDEN VISION INSTITUTE FOUNDATION**

**Report on the Audit of the Financial Report**

**Opinion**

We have audited the accompanying financial report of Brien Holden Vision Institute Foundation (the company), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2021, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies and the directors' declaration.

In our opinion, the financial report of Brien Holden Vision Institute Foundation is in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- (i) giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and of its performance for the year ended on that date; and
- (ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements (including Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

**Basis for Opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the *Corporations Act 2001* and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We confirm that the independence declaration required by the *Corporations Act 2001*, which has been given to the directors of the company, would be in the same terms if given to the directors as at the time of this auditor's report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.



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**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT  
TO THE MEMBERS OF  
BRIEN HOLDEN VISION INSTITUTE FOUNDATION  
(continued)**

**Key Audit Matters**

Key audit matters are those matters that, in our professional judgement, were of most significance in our audit of the financial report of the current period. These matters were addressed in the context of our audit of the financial report as a whole, and in forming our opinion thereon, and we do not provide a separate opinion on these matters.

*Going concern assessment*

In forming our opinion on the financial report, which is not modified, we have considered the adequacy concerning the company's ability to continue as a going concern. The company had continued negative operating cashflows as at financial year end.

Our audit work included, but was not restricted to, the following:

- An evaluation of the directors' assessment of the company's ability to continue as a going concern. In particular, we reviewed forecasts for the next 12 months;
- An evaluation of the directors' plans for future actions in relation to its going concern assessment, taking into account any relevant events subsequent to the year-end through discussions with those charged with governance; and
- Obtaining a letter of financial support from the Brien Holden Vision Institute Limited.

**Responsibilities of the Directors for the Financial Report**

The directors of the company are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and for such internal controls as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT  
TO THE MEMBERS OF  
BRIEN HOLDEN VISION INSTITUTE FOUNDATION  
(continued)**

**Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

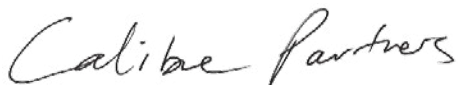
A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: <http://www.auasb.gov.au/Home.aspx>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

**Compliance with the ACFID Code of Conduct**

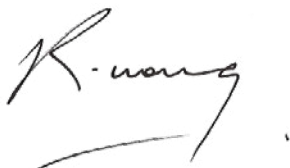
We have audited the accompanying Code of Conduct Summary Financial Reports of Brien Holden Vision Institute Foundation, which comprises the Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2021, the income statement, the statement of changes in equity and the table of cash movements for designated purposes for the year ended 30 June 2021.

**Audit Opinion Pursuant to the ACFID Code of Conduct**

In our opinion, the information reported in the Code of Conduct Summary Financial Reports set out on pages 31 to 33 are in accordance with the ACFID Code of Conduct and is consistent with the annual statutory financial report.



**Calibre Partners Pty Limited**



**Roger Wong**  
Director

Dated this 15<sup>th</sup> day of December 2021.



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# Brien Holden FOUNDATION

## Board Members

**Chair: Professor Serge Resnikoff**

**Professor Fiona Stapleton**

**Ms Yvette Waddell**

**Mr David Galbally**

**Professor Reuben Bolt**

**Ms Rebecca Hodges**

**Mr Willi Friderich**

## Feedback

We value your feedback. If you would like to provide us with feedback or would like to lodge a complaint please contact us and your message will be directed to the appropriate staff for resolution.

## Contact

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**Phone:** +61 2 9065 0700

**Write:** Brien Holden Foundation,  
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Sydney NSW 1466

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South Wales, Sydney NSW 2052 Australia



ACFID  
MEMBER

Brien Holden Vision Institute Foundation is committed to taking all reasonable measures to monitor and regulate organisation practices to fully adhere to the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct. Should you feel that the ACFID code has been breached and wish to take the matter further, please visit the complaints section at: [www.acfid.asn.au](http://www.acfid.asn.au)



**Australian  
Aid** 



Brien Holden Foundation  
is a registered charity:  
ABN 86 081 872 586

Find out more at [www.brienholdenfoundation.org](http://www.brienholdenfoundation.org)