

World Glaucoma week

Love your eyes # Get tested

Eye health and SDG



Glaucoma

Glaucoma is a disease of the optic nerve of the eye, which is basically the structure that relays what the eye sees to the brain.

Glaucoma is the second leading cause of blindness worldwide after cataract. It is the most common cause of irreversible blindness. Globally 78 million people has glaucoma and estimated to rise to 111.8 million by 2040. Everyone in 200 people aged 40 have glaucoma, which rises to one in eight by age of 80.

Family members of those with glaucoma have 4-8x greater risk of getting glaucoma themselves. 90% of glaucoma in developing countries undetected.

In many cases, glaucoma may be asymptomatic, meaning it shows no symptoms at early stage; half of those living with glaucoma are unaware that they are affected. If left untreated, continued damage to the optic nerve may gradually lead to peripheral (side) vision loss - that usually not noticeable until the condition is in its later stages, when finally visual impairment (noticed as foggy/cloudy vision), and in some cases blindness may occur. It's important to have regular eye exams.

WHEN TO GET CHECKED?

Because, the **EARLIER** the diagnosis, the less damage will be done and the more vision will be saved!

Before age 40 -every 2 - 4 years

From age 40 - 60 - every 2 - 3 years

After age 60 - every 1 - 2 years

Glaucoma does not have a cure, but it can be controlled. With proper treatment, vision loss can be slowed or prevented.

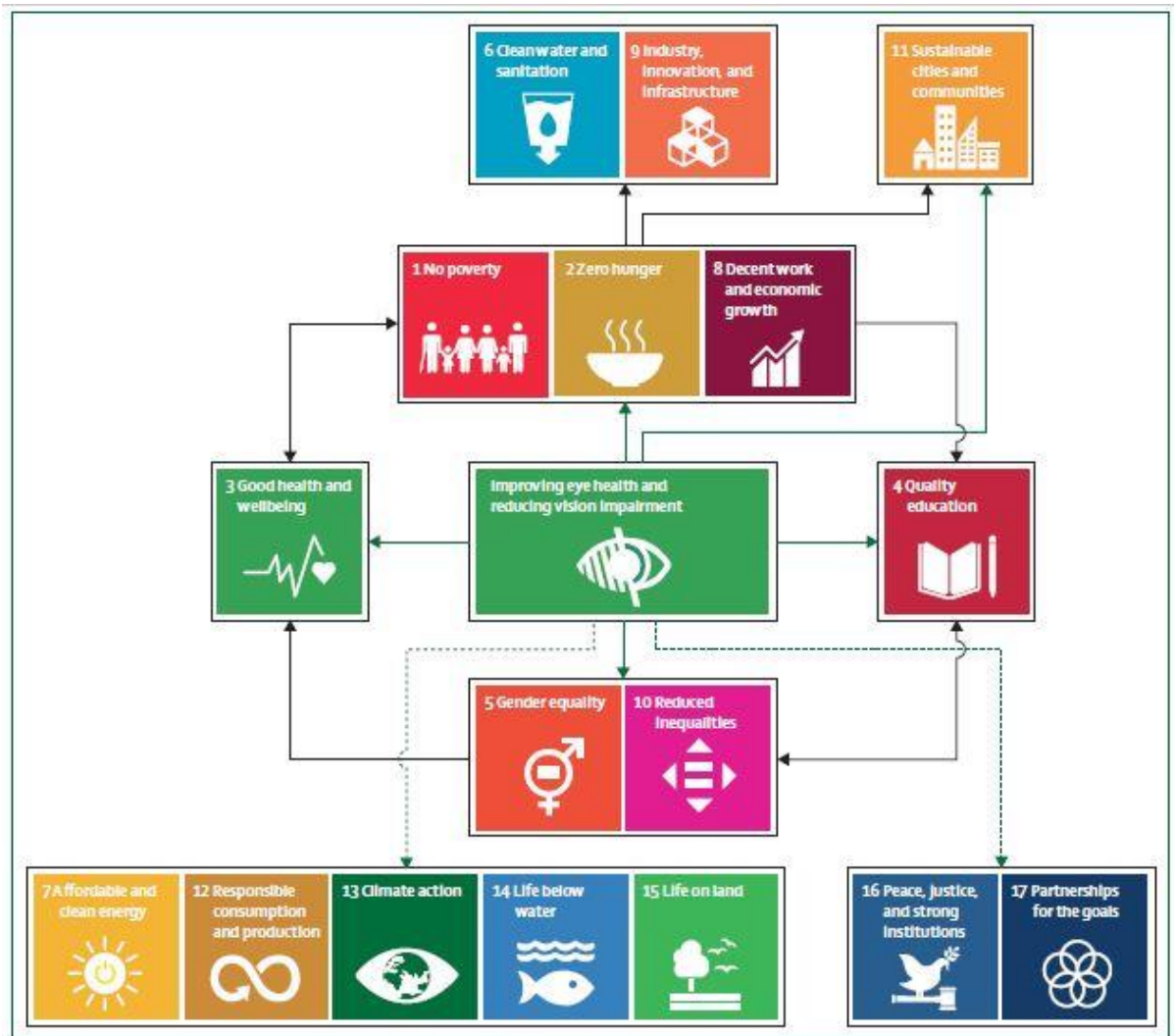


Figure 4: Improving eye health and Sustainable Development Goals

Green arrows indicate relationships with direct evidence of a beneficial effect from improving eye health on Sustainable Development Goals. Dashed green arrows represent hypothesised direct beneficial effects. Black arrows represent possible indirect beneficial effects.

Vision is not only affected by glaucoma, in 2020, 1.1 billion people were living with untreated vision impairment, and this is expected to grow to 1.8 billion by 2050. About 596 million people have distance vision impairment, of whom 43 million are blind. A further 510 million people have unaddressed near vision impairment.

Most of this vision impairment could have been prevented or can be treated. Around 90% of vision impairment is found in low-income and middle-income countries. It is often concentrated in under-served groups within countries, like women, rural populations, and ethnic minority groups.

Vision loss has many causes that require promotional, preventive, treatment, and rehabilitative interventions. Cataract, uncorrected refractive error, glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration, and diabetic retinopathy are responsible for most global vision impairment.

Eye health is defined as the state when vision, ocular health, and functional ability are maximised, thereby contributing to overall health and wellbeing, social inclusion, and quality

of life. Impaired eye health affects people across the full life course, represents a major public health challenge, and is a substantial barrier to sustainable development.

In 2015, all UN member states committed to work towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. Improving access to good quality eye health services globally is a key enabler to achieving more than half of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including those related to overall health, poverty, economic productivity, education and equality.

Eye health services include all types of interventions that improve eye health, encompassing the spectrum of promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation.

Improved eye health services -No poverty (SDG 1) and improves productivity (SDG 8)

Vision loss costs the global economy \$411 billion every year in lost productivity alone.

Several studies have shown increases in productivity, household expenditure and household income following access to eye health interventions.

For example, in the Philippines, household per capita expenditure increased by 88% over one year in people who underwent cataract surgery

Providing glasses can increase workplace productivity by 22%.

Improved eye health services - Zero hunger (SDG 2)

Eye care can increase household income and reduce hunger:

46% of households moved up an income bracket following cataract surgery

Improved eye health services - good health and well-being (SDG 3)

Reviews shown associations between vision impairment and increased risk of mortality, falls, dementia, mental health challenges, cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease and cancer.

Poor eye health increases the risk of mortality up to 2.6 times

Improved eye health services - Quality education (SDG 4)

Ninety-one million children have a vision impairment but do not have access to the eye care services they need.

Children with vision loss are 2-5 times less likely to be in formal education in low- and middle-income countries.

Good vision is associated with improved educational outcomes. The provision of spectacles can improve academic test scores, with one study in China showing that the provision of spectacles reduced the odds of failing a class by 44%.

Improved eye health services - Gender equality and reduced inequality (SDGs 5 & 10)

15% of people with vision loss are women and girls.

Interventions such as training rural community eye health volunteers and providing cataract surgery can reduce gender inequality in relation to attendance and treatment.

Similarly, income equality has been shown to be improved through cataract surgery.

Improved eye health services - Sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11)

Studies have shown that cataract surgery can reduce driving-related difficulties and motor vehicle crashes.

Unoperated cataract can increase the chance of a motor vehicle accident by 2.5 times

Improved eye health services - Climate action (SDG 13)

The health sector, including eye care, is responsible for 4.4% of all greenhouse gas emissions and has other impacts on the environment.

Climate change may also increase the prevalence of eye conditions and disrupt eye care delivery

Improved eye health services - Partnership for the goals (SDG 17)

Vision for everyone cannot be achieved without partnership.

Finally, vision is a primary sense that enables people to live, work and contribute to societies to their full capacity. It is urgent that good vision is prioritised appropriately.

Therefore, there is no sustainable development without quality eye care. Quality eye care for all!

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Reference

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