GIVING SIGHT TO SOWETO –

END OF PROJECT EVALUATION

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Brien Holden Vision Institute (BHVI) is a non-profit global scientific, research, innovation, education, licensing and public health organisation dedicated to providing creative and advanced solutions to ensure the provision of excellent vision for everyone, everywhere. The Institute's mission includes developing new solutions for vision care, especially refractive error and early disease detection, and to eliminate vision impairment and avoidable blindness, thereby raising the quality of life for all people, everywhere and helping to reduce disability and poverty for those in need. BHVI, South Africa implemented the project “GIVING SIGHT TO SOWETO” (GSS) supported by SEEING IS BELEIVING (SIB) program of the Standard Chartered Bank.

BHVI, South Africa implemented this project in collaboration with Provincial Department of Education-Gauteng and Provincial Department of Health-Gauteng between October 2012 & June 2017. The overall aim of the project was to Improve and strengthen comprehensive eye health services in Soweto by integrating it within the district health system.

 The Project objectives included:

1. Increase the capacity of existing health personnel, and placement of appropriate human resources to improve eye health services within the DHS;
2. Optimize available infrastructure to deliver appropriate, comprehensive and specialized eye health services within the DHS;
3. Enhance screening and management of comprehensive eye health services and refractive errors in particular;
4. Strengthen referral systems and protocols;
5. Strengthen the District Health Information System (DHIS) by including eye health indicators in the District Health Information System (DHIS);
6. Increase health promotion and awareness about eye health.

This project was implemented in Sub-Districts D1 and D2 in Soweto, which is in the City of Johannesburg in the Gauteng Province. The Johannesburg metropolitan is the economic hub of South Africa with a population of 3,701,534. The sub-districts have 1 quaternary hospital (Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital), 23 satellite PHC clinics, 5 Community Health Centres (CHCs), and one specialized TB hospital. Strengthening the South African Health System, particularly the two sub-districts, to deliver comprehensive eye care services was the foundation of this proposal. Giving Sight in Soweto therefore set out to;

* Directly provide services to detect, diagnose and manage ocular conditions of three priority areas, i.e. refractive error, low vision and rehabilitation, and childhood blindness.
* Train Health care workers to act as case finders for blinding conditions such as cataract, diabetic retinopathy, hypertensive retinopathy and glaucoma.

The proposed evaluation was a mandatory final project evaluation to be conducted by an external evaluator who has had experience in such evaluations within the health and development sector and in particular within the eye care sector. This was also included in the Project Cycle Management at the design of the project. The overall objective of this evaluation was to assess the extent to which the project goal, outcomes, objectives and outputs had been met over the project duration within the project coverage area.

A participatory approach towards finding the facts of the key evaluation questions for the ‘Giving Sight to Soweto’ project was undertaken between July 29th and 5th August 2017. The terms of reference developed by the implementing agency Brien Holden Vision Institute was reviewed by the consultant before agreeing on the visits and observation.

The methodology included: Desk based review, field visits, stakeholder interviews and discussions and documentation and debriefing of the project implementation team.

The results of the project review illustrate that the initiative:

* + 1. Is relevant to the population of the sub districts in terms of availability, affordability, accessibility and acceptability of appropriately needed eye health service.
		2. The numbers demonstrate that the project has adequately addressed the needs of secondary level eye care services including low vision and paediatric eye care services through trained and placed quality human resources.
		3. The project has been very efficient in addressing the needs of beneficiaries by consultation and delivery of affordable correction in the form of spectacles.
		4. The project has also been effective in delivering of a much needed eye care service in the population it has catered to through a network.
		5. Steps to develop a sustainable model through facility development and up gradation and equipping, placement of quality trained staff, service delivery mechanism and a sound referral system has been achieved.
		6. Advocacy to the district and provincial authorities and formalization of a policy and plan in consultation with the National authorities and other key stakeholders is due soon.
		7. An area of concern is DHIS which hinders the component of policy and program development as well as evidence based planning and needs to be urgently addressed.

The project has all the ingredients to be scaled up as well as to be transplanted to another sub- district depending on the contextual analysis.

Efforts should be made to communicate and disseminate this project and learning internationally through publications and meetings/conferences.