The World Blind Union is the global organization representing the estimated 285 million people who are blind or partially sighted worldwide. We are blind men and women who advocate on our own behalf for full and equal participation in all aspects of community life.

Our members are organizations of and for the blind in some 190 countries, as well as international organizations working in the field of vision impairment.

We work through our 6 regions: Africa, Asia, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America, and North America & the Caribbean. We are governed by an officers board comprised of six region presidents and six internationally elected officers: Arnt Holte from Norway, Fredric Schroeder of the USA, Enrique Perez of Spain, Rina Prasarani of Indonesia, A.K. Mittal of India and Maryanne Diamond of Australia.

Blindness Facts

- Worldwide, 285 million people are visually impaired; of these, 39 million people are blind.
- And 246 million people have low vision
- About 90% of blind people live in low-income countries.
- 65% of visually impaired people are over 50 years of age.
- About 2/3 of all blind people worldwide are women.
- Less than 10% of all blind children in developing countries can access education.
- Up to 80% of all visual impairment is avoidable by prevention, treatment or cure

World Blind Union

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Our Vision

A community where people who are blind and partially sighted are empowered to participate on an equal basis in any aspect of life they choose.

Our Key Priorities:

- Human Rights & Representation
- Accessibility
- Capacity Building
- Information Sharing & Collaboration

www.worldblindunion.org
Our work... you can learn more about us on our website: www.worldblindunion.org

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Global Implementation

This UN Convention is the main instrument to provide human rights for the world’s 1 billion disabled people. Success in making a difference in the lives of disabled people rests with its implementation taking place at the country level. WBU works with our national members to ensure they understand the Convention, and the opportunity for blind and low vision persons to participate fully in society.

Promotion of Braille

The ability to read and write is vital in order to learn. Blind people need affordable means of producing materials in braille to communicate effectively. We are working on the development of an affordable braille display to provide access to refreshable braille for blind persons around the world.

Right to Read Campaign

Did you know that over 90% of all published materials cannot be accessed to be read by people who are blind or have low vision? WBU is leading the campaign, now known as the Marrakech Treaty, to increase the availability of books in accessible formats and to end the current book famine. We need all countries to sign and ratify this important treaty.

An Inclusive World

We work with the United Nations (UN) and its agencies to create awareness around important issues. We provide input on standards for silent cars to ensure our safety in public spaces. We are the voice of the blind on global issues like the Post 2015 UN development goals so they are inclusive of the needs of blind people, and we work to impact future UN policies for accessibility.

Right to Work Campaign

Only about 25% of working age blind people are employed; and in developing areas of the globe like Africa, Asia & Latin America, the number falls below 10%. With figures like these, blind and partially sighted people cannot live as equals in society. We created the website Project Aspiro to help improve these employment statistics.

We also work to make technology and infrastructure inclusive so that blind people can contribute to their culture. We have committees and working groups for special interest such as women, youth, seniors and children.

You can learn which organizations are members and more about our work by viewing our website. Or follow us on Twitter @blindunion for updates on these campaigns.