The World Blind Union is the global organization representing the estimated 253 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 about 190 countries, as well as international organizations working in the field of vision impairment.

We work through six regions: Africa, Asia, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America, and North America & the Caribbean. We are governed by a board of officers comprised of six regional presidents and six internationally elected officers: Dr. Fredric Schroeder of USA, Mr. Fernando Riaño of Spain, Ms. Donatilla Kanimba of Rwanda, Mr. Ajai Kumar Mittal of India, Mrs. Martine Abel-Williamson of New Zealand and Mr. Arnt Holte of Norway.

www.worldblindunion.org

Vision Impairment Facts

- Worldwide, 253 million people are visually impaired; of these, 36 million people are blind and 217 million people have moderate or severe vision impairment.
- 124 million people have uncorrected refractive errors and 65 million have cataracts.
- More than 75% of all blindness and visual impairment is avoidable.
- 89% of vision impaired people live in low and middle-income countries.
- 55% of moderate or severely vision impaired people are women.

Source: The International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB)

World Blind Union

Our Vision

A world in which we, as blind or partially sighted people, can participate fully in any aspect of life we choose.

Our key Priorities (2017 - 2020)

Human Rights and Representation
Accessibility
Capacity Building
Information Sharing and Collaboration

1929 Bayview Avenue
Toronto, ON
M4G 3E8 Canada
Phone: 416-486-9698
Fax: 416-486-8107
E-mail: info@wbu.ngo
Twitter and Facebook: @BlindUnion

www.worldblindunion.org
or www.wbu.ngo
Human Rights and Representation

The WBU promotes full participation, equal opportunities and the human rights of blind and partially sighted people. We work with our members to monitor ratification and implementation of human rights instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We ensure that our members are actively engaged in the implementation processes and understand the implications and opportunities provided by these instruments.

We also ensure representation at the United Nations and relevant global forums where we promote inclusion and equal participation in all matters affecting our lives.

Marrakesh Treaty

Over 90% of all published materials cannot be read by blind or partially sighted people. We lead the Marrakesh Treaty campaign to increase availability of books in accessible formats. We need all countries to ratify the Treaty.

Capacity Building

We build the capacity of our members to tackle issues of blindness and low vision. Our focus is to improve employment opportunities for blind and partially sighted people, through Project Aspiro, a career planning and employment resource. We also develop tools to improve our members' capacity to work collaboratively and share resources. Furthermore, we build leadership skills to empower target groups such as blind and partially sighted women and youth.

Accessibility

The WBU works towards a world that is accessible to blind and partially sighted persons. We promote access to low and high technology solutions, accessible consumer and household goods, mobile technologies and accessible services. We also promote safe environments, especially Shared Spaces, to ensure independent travel and easy mobility for people with visual impairment. Meanwhile, we are monitoring the development of self-driving cars to ensure that they are detectable and accessible to blind people.

Information Sharing and Collaboration

We raise awareness and provide resources on matters related to blind and partially sighted people through the WBU website, social media and other communications channels. We also use these channels to reinforce our alliances with international organizations.

Promotion of Braille

We advance braille literacy through the work of the World Braille Council. Specifically, we promote the teaching and availability of refreshable braille around the world.

Learn more about our work and member organizations on our website: www.worldblindunion.org
Also follow us on Twitter and Facebook @BlindUnion