

WORLD BLIND UNION

2022 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN – SHORT FORM

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Introduction

The World Blind Union’s (WBU’s) 2022 – 2025 Strategic Plan charts an ambitious path forward, centred on our purpose and the human

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impacts we want to create for the people we exist to represent and serve.

The document is organized into Three Parts.

Part 1 contains our Long-term Vision, Purpose, Mission, and Values. These statements encompass our aspirations, ideals, scope of work, and why they matter for people who are blind or partially sighted.

Part 2 is our Strategic Framework. This section contains our 4-year Strategic Vision, Theory of Change, and Strategic Framework which outlines how we believe we can achieve our vision between now and 2025. There is a description of how the strategic framework is structured on page 9.

Part 3 is our Human Impact Framework (HIF), an innovative tool pioneered by our consultants, ION Leadership Consulting (www.ionconsulting.ca). This human-centric model of impact is a complementary tool to our strategic plan. It serves as an “operating system” and stabilizing force to ensure that, if – and/or when – we must adjust our strategies, we anchor everything we do on how we want lives to improve. The HIF is explained in more detail in Part 3.

Overall, this strategic plan is intentionally broad and far-reaching. It provides the necessary framework under which we can create our annual plans for action. Those plans will give more detail to what we aim to achieve, how, when and with whom. Regardless, all plans are built on a foundation that must be honoured and protected, and our work will be underpinned by certain things that will always be true.

We will always promote the interests and needs of people who are blind or partially sighted first and foremost. We will continue to create change by working within the current and emerging human rights and disability-inclusive development frameworks such as the UN CRPD, Agenda 2030, New Urban Agenda, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and Paris Agreement on Climate Action, and Charter on Humanitarian Action. We will continue to use an intersectional lens to inform our decisions and guide our actions. We will safeguard our

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reputation and brand, ensuring our economic, social and governance sustainability along the way.

The WBU thanks the contributors to this plan including our members, the Executive Committee, our CEO, and our funders. Most of all, we wish to thank the hundreds of millions of people who are blind or partially sighted who have entrusted the World Blind Union to represent their collective voice and interests on the global stage.

Part 1 – Long-Term Vision, Mission, Purpose and Values

Our Long-term Vision

We dream of a future where the children of today will one day say, “I’m blind, it’s no big deal:” A future where their lives are free of human-made barriers that prevent them from living with full participation, autonomy, and freedom. They will not have to fight for their rights because it is second nature for their needs to be factored into the built environment; and their voices will be integral to the work of institutions and systems that uphold and defend human rights. They will be able to achieve their full potential and pursue their dreams however they choose.

Our Purpose

To co-create a future where people who are blind or partially sighted enjoy full participation, autonomy, and freedom.

Our Mission

As an organization representing the unified voices of all people who are blind or partially sighted, our mission is to advance our rights and improve our living conditions worldwide. We promote the full participation of our members in co-creating the political, legal, social, and economic conditions globally for people who are blind or partially

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sighted to have equity, freedom, choice, and autonomy. We do this through:

- Creating and supporting opportunities for our voices to be heard at the global, regional, and national levels in all matters affecting our lives
- Influencing worldwide legal, regulatory, economic, and social agendas
- Creating supports and tools that help member regions and states to implement local change that is made possible and necessary by international-level policy change
- Supporting – and seeking support – for projects that improve conditions and alleviate the burden and harm caused by barriers for people who are blind or partially sighted
- And undertaking other activities and initiatives that promote the equity and full participation of people who are blind or partially sighted in all aspects of social, economic, political, and cultural life

Our Values

WBU embodies the foundational values of transparency, accountability, respect, and ethics, but it is our core values – and how they interact – that make us unique. Our core values include:

Human Rights

We live by and push the standards that recognize and protect all human beings

Solidarity

We are stronger together and stand united in co-creating a better world for people who are blind or partially sighted

Equity

We all have the indivisible, inalienable and equal right to live our lives, barrier-free, with autonomy, choice, and freedom

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Human Spirit

We honor and celebrate the diverse ways that the human spirit shows up through the perseverance, creativity and resolve of people who are blind or partially sighted

Inclusion and Belonging

We are fiercely committed to doing the right thing to ensure people who are blind or partially sighted experience belonging, mattering, and freedom to live their lives as they choose

Intersectionality

We value and are inclusive of the intersectional identities of people who are blind or partially sighted, including identities associated with abilities, race, gender, sexual orientation, age, social class, religion, and other identity markers.

Part 2: Strategic Framework

Our Strategic 4-year Vision

By 2025, WBU will be a more influential, agile, modern, and proactive organization that has successfully strengthened and leveraged its community capital to co-create greater worldwide impact. We will be known for leading international policy-level change *with* our members; and supporting them in implementing in-country improvements that these policy changes enable with practical tools and access to expert support. By 2025, our community and the people they serve will have regained lost ground due to the impacts of the global pandemic, and advanced the implementation of the Marrakesh Treaty. We also will have continued to advance our work through engaging with and using other instruments such as the UN CRPD, Agenda 2030 and other continuing and emerging Human Rights and Disability Inclusive Development frameworks. More regions and members will have acted on our existing base of research, and we will have been strategic in generating research that enables future change. We will have held a

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more engaging General Assembly where, among other things, we will have ratified important governance changes, and identified and launched our next major international campaign to bring about lasting change that universally improves access and affordability for people who are blind or partially sighted. We also will have deployed more resources and supports to the global south. By working with key allies, industries and institutions will be increasingly using universal design principles so that our lived environments and experiences are more accessible and affordable. By 2025 we will be better at making decisions informed by intersectionality at all ages and life stages, and youth, women and seniors will be more empowered and engaged with WBU. We will have delivered an online learning portal and used digital and online tools to meet more often, facilitate collaboration, and establish convenient access to information, expertise, and support. Our organization will have substantially grown its financial resources, which will have enabled greater support to our members, committees, and regions. We will be evaluating and learning about our impacts in a more systematic and disciplined fashion and sharing more stories of transformation worthy of the great work that is really happening.

Our Overarching Theory of Change

If we represent the collective voices of people worldwide who are blind or partially sighted to co-create global policy-level changes;

and we resource and support national members and regions implementing practical tools and instruments to affect meaningful legal, regulatory, social and environmental change in their own countries and regions;

we expect to see an improvement in the living and life conditions of people who are blind or partially sighted worldwide.

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How the Strategic Framework is Organized

Items in our strategic plan are listed in the following order:

- Strategic Area – the highest level of classification. There are three strategic areas: Advocacy, Capacity Building, and Organizational Excellence
- 2025 Goal – the highest-level goal to achieve by 2025 in each of the 3 Strategic Areas
- Desired 2025 Outcome – the outcomes we hope to see if we achieve our goals
- Priorities – strategic priorities are the intended actions that will help us achieve our 2025 vision. The numbering of the priorities in this document is for reference only. The numbers do not imply the rank or importance of one priority relative to another.

Strategic Area 1 - ADVOCACY

2025 Goal: Affect global changes that enable the full participation, autonomy, and freedom for people who are blind or partially sighted

Desired 2025 Outcome: We have influenced global policy instruments to affect changes that have compelled and necessitated that regional and national law makers, governments, and institutions provide greater access, support, and equity for people who are blind or partially sighted.

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Priority 1: Continue to Strengthen our Current Advocacy Agenda Utilizing Diverse Human Rights and Disability-Inclusive Development Frameworks

Priority 2: Intensify our Advocacy and Impact in the Global South

Priority 3: Improve the Ratification of the Marrakesh Treaty and Other Human Rights and Disability Inclusive Development Frameworks such as the CRPD, Agenda 2030, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Action

Priority 4: Identify and Build Excitement for our Advocacy Agenda for 2025 - 2029

Priority 5: Grow and Strengthen WBU's Brand, Reputation and Global Leadership as the Authoritative Voice for People who are Blind or Partially Sighted

Priority 6. Model the Change we want to See in the World

Priority 7. Support and Show Solidarity with Members who have Movements for Bottom-up Change

Strategic Area 2 - CAPACITY BUILDING

2025 Goal: Our members are well supported in implementing tools and frameworks for country-level changes that enhance the lives of those who are blind or partially sighted

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Desired 2025 Outcome: The WBU is highly relevant to members, and by investing in their success, we have enabled a significant increase in the local (in-country) use and deployment of instruments and tools to impact a greater proportion of the world's population of people who are blind or partially sighted.

Priority 8. Strengthen a Socially Sustainable and Mutually Supportive Membership Community

Priority 9. Increase Member Access to Information, Tools, Training and Support

Priority 10. Equip Members with Timely and Actionable Research and Reports

Priority 11. Develop a More Nuanced Approach to Working with and Supporting Regions

Priority 12. Support Greater Committee Engagement, Accessibility and Performance

Priority 13. Improve the Member Experience at the General Assembly

Priority 14. Empower and Elevate the Voices and Participation of Women, Youth, Seniors and People with Intersectional Identities

Priority 15. Promote Opportunities for Access to and Participation in International Sport, Recreation and Fitness

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Strategic Area 3 - ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

2025 Goal: The WBU is an inclusive, purpose-driven, and exemplary organization that has a meaningful impact on members, volunteers, employees, and partners who work to improve conditions for those who are blind or partially sighted

Desired 2025 Outcome: The WBU is a sustainable and exemplary organization that provides an exceptional employment experience. By 2025 we have a stronger brand, more resources, a more modern organization, and greater impact clarity.

Priority 16. Increase our Financial Sustainability and Access to Resources

Priority 17. Develop Excellence in Generating, Monitoring, and Evaluating Our Impact

Priority 18. Communicate More Effectively and Dynamically with our Community

Priority 19. Make WBU more Agile and Proactive

Priority 20. Better Include and Empower People with Intersectional Identities and Amplify their Voices

Priority 21. Become More Environmentally Sustainable

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Priority 22. Modernize and Sustain the Governance Excellence of the Organization

Priority 23. Increase Accountability and Access to WBU Leaders

Priority 24. Tap into the Goodwill and Wisdom of our Community in Areas Where we Need Support

Priority 25. Provide an Exceptional Employee Experience

Part 3 – Human Impact Framework

Introduction

We believe our 4-year strategic vision is within reach if things remain relatively stable and predictable. However, recent events have demonstrated that the world is highly unpredictable, and we must adjust our strategy and priorities as circumstances change.

Regardless of what the world throws at us, our highest-level intentions for impact on the lives of those who matter most will likely not change much. Our Human Impact Framework (HIF) puts people at the centre of our strategy. It builds on our identity, purpose, vision, and theory of change to communicate why implementing the strategic plan matters for our members and those who are blind or partially sighted worldwide.

Every aspect of the HIF is meant to reinforce and strengthen other aspects. Our model is best understood as a dynamic and generative system that is constantly interacting and evolving. It does not aim to capture the full range of the lived human experience or changes necessary for people to enjoy full participation, freedom, and

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autonomy. Rather, our framework clarifies how we hope our work positively influences the lives of people who are blind or partially sighted.

Our Human Impact Framework is organized in two parts. The first is our direct human impact on the lives of our members. The second is where we can have mainly indirect impact; on people who are blind or partially sighted worldwide. Our HIF is presented in both narrative and diagrammatic versions.

Narrative Human Impact Framework

Direct Human Impact – WBU Members

Our theory of change identifies that WBU achieves our greatest impact for people who are blind or partially sighted through our work with and for our members. What we want for our members is as follows.

Community and Belonging

If our members are united in action around our shared purpose of co-creating a future where people who are blind or partially sighted can enjoy full participation, autonomy, and freedom, they will experience a stronger sense of community and belonging.

Influence

If we all belong in this community, we also must all have a voice in setting the global agenda for advocacy. When our members have a voice, they also have influence.

Contribution and Power

If we engage the members who want to participate in co-creating the global conditions that will necessitate and compel local, in-country institutions, systems, and conditions to change, they have greater opportunity for contribution and power.

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Capacity

If we provide our members with equitable access to information, resources, and support, they will have greater capacity to affect change within their countries and regions.

Change

If we support our members to implement global tools and instruments in-country, they will have meaningful and lasting change.

Solidarity and Strength

If we can support our members to co-create and connect local and global movements that aim to improve the conditions for those who are blind or partially sighted, they will have greater solidarity and strength.

This solidarity and strength will reinforce all our human impacts and ultimately lead to greater strategic and indirect impacts in realizing our long-term vision.

Indirect Human Impact Framework – People who are Blind or Partially Sighted Worldwide

Our members work with their local agencies, communities, and decision-makers to create the direct impact on the lives of those who are blind or partially sighted, and we play an indirect role.

Nevertheless, we want to articulate our intended impacts in broad terms for people who are blind or partially sighted so that we can also evaluate our future decisions against these impacts.

Our Indirect Human Impact Framework narrative is as follows.

Safety and Security

We stand for the provision and protection of human rights for people worldwide who are blind or partially sighted. With human rights, they have a greater chance of safety and security.

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Liberation and Freedom

We want people who are blind or partially sighted to be liberated from the burden and harm caused by human-made barriers. With liberation from these barriers, people will experience greater freedom.

Participation and Autonomy

We want people who are blind or partially sighted to have true equity in access to supports. This will provide them with full participation and autonomy in how they live their lives and pursue their dreams.

Belonging and Mattering

We want all people who are blind or partially sighted to have access and connection to community. This connection fulfills our shared human need for greater belonging and mattering.

Self-actualization

We want everyone to have equitable access to personal and professional development so that if they choose to pursue these paths, they can experience greater self-actualization and pursue their dreams.

Diagrammatic Form

The diagram on the next page contains two circles that put WBU's Human Impact narrative into imagery for individuals who find visuals easy to follow. The left circle is the direct human impact, and the right is the indirect. Each circle has two concentric circles within them. The centre circle contains the label "people," the next concentric circle (middle circle) contains the label "influence," and the final circle contains the label "human impact." Text fills the "influence circle to explain how WBU's contribution or influence is intended to have

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impact, and the corresponding impact is listed near it in the outer circle. There are arrows that turn the circles toward one another to represent that if we create movement in one it will move the other. Between the circles are two arching dotted lines to represent the essential and supporting role of in-country direct service providers and institutions, systems, and environment.

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Human Impact Framework Diagram

