THE INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
To change what it means to be blind and/or visually impaired in Africa
Introducing the Institutional Development Program (IDP)
The IDP is a capacity-development program working with organizations of blind people in Africa.

The Need
In Africa, more than twenty million blind and partially sighted people are in need of services.

Organizations of blind people are developed as entities to advocate for opportunities for citizenship and equal participation for blind and partially sighted people.

Every member country of the African Union has an organization of blind persons in need of capacity building and service models.

Blind women, girls, and children and youth with visual disabilities are among the most underprivileged people in Africa.

How?
The IDP supports:
- Individual empowerment
- Building strong community organizations
- Access to inclusive services
- Advocacy for the rights of blind and partially sighted people
- Regional Training
- Mentoring

Development and Structure of IDP
The IDP was founded in 1991 by Sight Savers International and the Hilton/Perkins Program to support the work of the World Blind Union (WBU) and the African Union of the Blind (AFUB).

The IDP is managed by an international team. Its operation is led from the Hilton/Perkins Program at the Perkins School for the Blind in the USA, supported by a senior manager from Sight Savers International in the UK, and includes a team of consultants and trainers, all who are Africans based in Africa.

The Institutional Development Program is led by blind and partially sighted persons and recruits trainers who are blind or partially sighted. The operational team meets twice yearly for planning and evaluation. A management board representing the sponsoring agencies meets annually to provide oversight of the program.

Goals of the Institutional Development Program
1. To create empowered individuals and sustainable organizations, by:
   - Facilitating national and regional networking
   - Nurturing mutual learning and sharing among partners
   - Setting up peer review mechanisms
   - Facilitating growth and ownership of the Africa Forum—an opportunity every three years for intra-Africa networking amongst organizations, professionals, families, and blind and partially sighted persons

2. To provide and improve training, by:
   - Training senior managers in the "flagship" course known as the Senior Management Institute (SMI)

3. To empower partners to act independently and become powerful advocates for the rights and needs of their community, by:
   - Regularly reviewing the content of the SMI and other training courses
   - Assisting partner organizations to develop a training plan
   - Identifying additional training needs and opportunities
   - Publicizing the range of training courses available through the IDP

IDP’s Values
The philosophy of the IDP is grounded in a belief in the empowerment of the individual. The program works to empower blind and partially sighted people to participate fully in their communities by strengthening the capacity of organizations of and for the blind. We do this by:
- Developing leadership skills at national and community levels;
- Building democratic systems that are operated and managed transparently by participating organizations;
- Strengthening the capacity of partner organizations to provide a range of services for blind people;
- Facilitating access to services;
- Building individual and group capacity to advocate for their rights as members of society in general and their home community in particular.
Where? Africa

Why? To change what it means to be blind or visually impaired.

Introducing the Institutional Development Program (IDP)

For individuals, the IDP builds personal confidence and enables blind people to seek a life of independence, productivity, and self-determination.

For organizations, the IDP strengthens the operational capacity of agencies providing and/or advocating for services to blind and partially sighted people through training, technical support, consultancy, and mentoring to partner organizations.
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For further information, please contact:

Aubrey Webson
Hilton/Perkins Program
617-972-7534
aubrey.webson@perkins.org

–or–

Christopher Friend
Sightsavers International
44-4444-663
cfriend@sightsavers.org

–or–
africaforum2007@kub.or.ke or visit:

Perkins School for the Blind

Founded in 1829 as the nation’s first school for the blind, Perkins School for the Blind serves babies and elders in their homes; school-age students on campus and in New England communities; and deafblind children in over 55 developing countries. Perkins Braille & Talking Book Library reaches patrons throughout New England; Howe Press produces and distributes the Perkins Brailler; and Perkins Training Center runs classes for educators. Every year Perkins reaches over 70,000 people.

Perkins School for the Blind
175 North Beacon Street
Watertown, MA 02472
617-972-728 phone
617-972-734 fax
www.Perkins.org

All we see is possibility… Founded in 1829