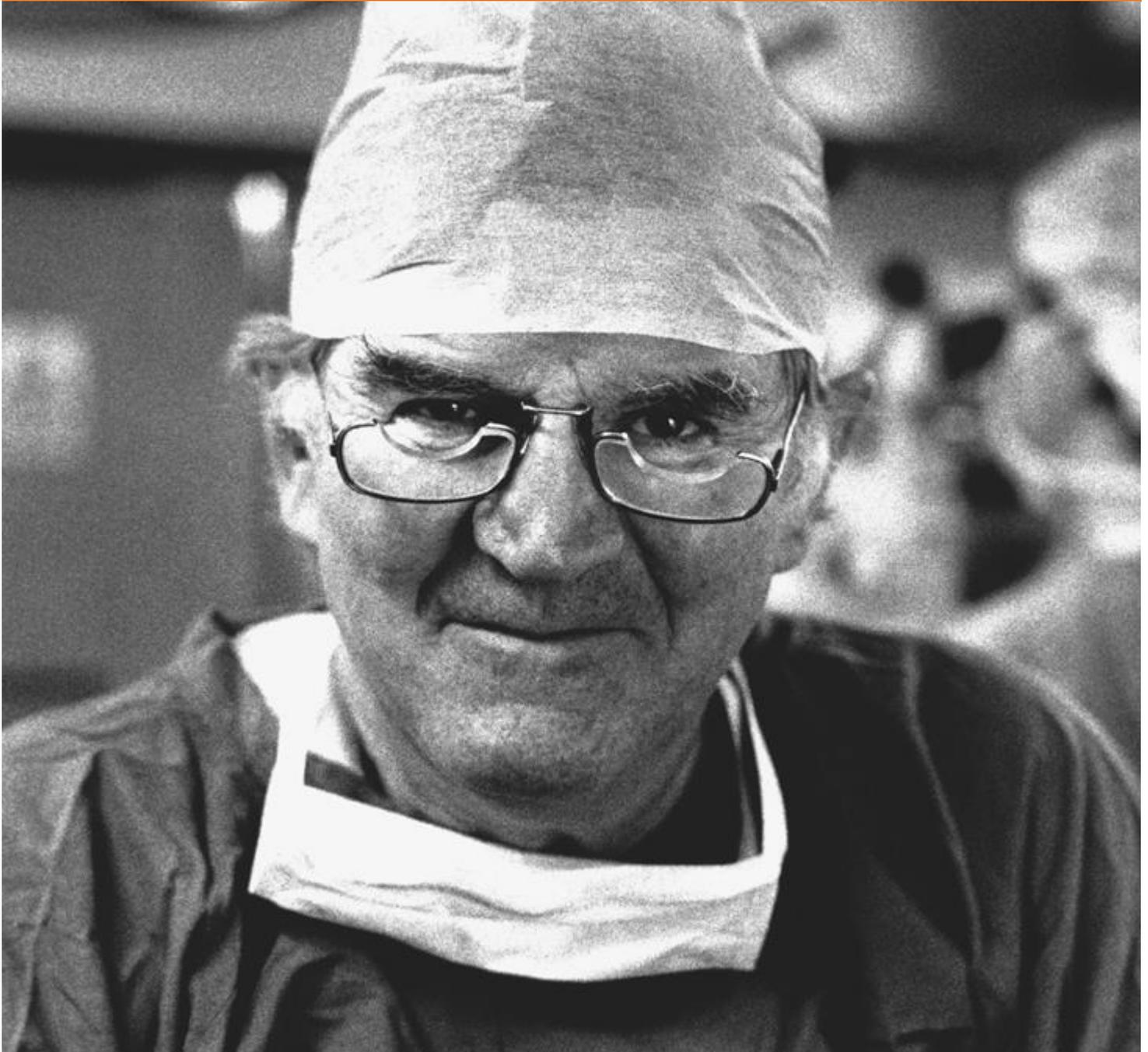


# THE FRED HOLLOWES FOUNDATION

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Position Statement on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



**The Fred Hollows**  
Foundation

## CONTEXT

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) provides a global blueprint to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all. Adopted by all Member States of the United Nations on 25 September 2016, the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a framework of 17 areas of action in the pursuit of responsible and sustainable development. Grounded in the principles of universality and pragmatism, the SDGs represent not only a global opportunity, but an imperative for countries, businesses and civil society to collaboratively work towards a more prosperous, sustainable and equitable future for all.

Restoring sight transforms lives. It can enable individuals and families to pull themselves out of poverty, help people to return to work or school, and overcome the inequity, marginalisation and exclusion that blindness and vision loss often perpetuate. People living with blindness and vision impairment in developing countries are often poorer and less likely to engage in paid work, compared to those without a vision impairment. Helping to restore sight has been shown to have sustained economic benefits, raising individuals and their families out of poverty, and increasing likelihood of people returning to productive activities and paid work. Six years after receiving cataract surgery, studies have found that people who received treatment enjoy economic and health-related quality of life indicators on par with people without vision impairment. Of the 36 million people in the world who are blind, 4 out of 5 suffer from conditions that can be treated or prevented, with the vast majority living in low and middle income countries. Good eye health promotes health and wellbeing and is interlinked with the achievement of the 2030 Agenda; failing to prevent and treat avoidable blindness and vision impairment can be seen as an indicator of the failure of the SDG's central tenet to leave no-one behind.

## OUR POSITION

1. The Foundation supports the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and considers the global ambition of the SDGs to be consistent with The Foundation's vision to see a world in which no person is needlessly blind or vision impaired. The Foundation has a proud history of working with marginalised people and communities around the world, and is committed to targeted action to ensure no one is left behind.
2. The Foundation's work contributes most substantially to the achievement of *Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages*. The Foundation has restored sight to more than 2.5 million people and our priority is to work with communities to improve their own eye health. We do this through life changing surgeries and treatments, training doctors and health workers, generating new ideas, and pushing for change at all levels – from local to global.
3. While The Foundation's core mission aligns particularly well to Goal 3, the positive development impacts of good vision reach beyond good health, and The Foundation strives to contribute to the achievement of all SDGs. In particular, our programs seek to reduce inequity (SDG 10) with a focus on gender (SDG 5), improve access to education (SDG 4) and reduce poverty (SDG 1). The Foundation recognises the impact of health and eye health services on the environment and is working to reduce its negative environmental footprint (SDG 12). Across everything we do, The Foundation works in partnership with government, non-government, private and community stakeholders to achieve the change we seek (SDG17).
4. Ultimately it is the responsibility of governments to implement the SDGs and The Foundation calls upon national governments around the world to show leadership in working towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. To that end, The Foundation is actively advocating at the global and national level to encourage governments to develop SDG implementation plans, accompanied by appropriate human and financial resourcing and to ensure efforts towards universal health coverage includes eye health. As a minimum, governments should include cataract surgical coverage as an indicator in their annual reports and Voluntary National Reviews to the UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Cataract Surgical

Coverage is a key indicator for effective, high-quality, and affordable comprehensive eye care services, and has been endorsed by the World Health Organization and the World Bank as an effective indicator for the achievement of Universal Health Coverage.

5. Civil society and the private sector both have a vital role in contributing to the 2030 Agenda and in holding governments to account. The Foundation calls upon the eye health sector to actively promote avoidable blindness and vision impairment as an important cross-cutting issue and hold itself accountable through routine, public reporting of its contribution to the SDGs. Civil society and the private sector also have roles to play in providing support to governments and other key actors in measuring progress, planning and operationalising their responses to the SDGs. We call on them to support governments through research and innovation initiatives to overcome evidence gaps and identify more sustainable means of providing equitable and cost-effective care.

## OUR COMMITMENT

The Foundation has released a Contribution Report, mapping our core contribution to the 2030 Agenda. This is however, only the first step to meaningful engagement with the 2030 Agenda. We are committed to doing more, strengthening our engagement and playing a leadership role within the eye health sector and beyond.

Looking forward to 2023, The Foundation is committed to leaving no one behind in access to eye health and has placed a renewed emphasis on equity at the heart of our new strategic plan. We will build on our knowledge and understanding of how we, and how eye health more broadly, can contribute to the SDGs, and we will embed this learning across our program, advocacy, research and business operations. We will share what we have learned, collaborate and partner with others to ensure eye health is promoted and recognised as a cross-cutting issue that both contributes to and is impacted by the SDGs.

Over the next three years, Goal 3 will remain as The Foundation's unique value offering under the 2030 Agenda, and we will focus our effort on scaling up access to eye health services and strengthening health systems as part of universal health coverage. In particular, we will work to ensure effective access to cataract treatment, the elimination of trachoma, effective refractive error prevention and the provision of glasses, and will work to ensure diabetic retinopathy and other eye conditions can be affordably managed. With Goal 3 at the centre, The Foundation will continue to strengthen its interaction related to gender (Goal 5), education (Goal 4), poverty (Goal 1), inequality (Goal 10), sustainable consumption (Goal 12) and fostering the partnership for sustainable development (Goal 17) as its package of core SDGs.

The Foundation will share its progress as we strive to contribute to sustainable development and is committed to reviewing its approach to the 2030 Agenda in 2021.

## ACHIEVING FRED'S DREAM

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides an invaluable and transformative opportunity to build a better future for generations to come. The late Prof Fred Hollows dreamed of a fairer, more equitable world and he understood the transformative potential of good sight to reducing poverty and marginalisation, access to education, and improving livelihoods and economic opportunity. Achievement of the SDGs would help translate Fred's dream into reality.

**“Real Humanity is shown when we care for others”**

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