



October 10: World Sight Day 2013

**UNCORRECTED POOR VISION:
The most widespread and least known of all handicaps**

Consequences of uncorrected poor vision:

- The world economy loses **almost 1.3 billion dollars each day** in productivity
- Hip fractures caused by falls in elderly people cost **nearly 1 million dollars per day** in the USA

For the first time, an institute gathers together available data in the world on the socio-economic impacts of poor vision: The Vision Impact Institute.

Poor vision remains the number one handicap worldwide and currently affects 4.2 billion people, of whom roughly 2.5 billion do not benefit from correction. Yet, the necessary means to correct poor vision and contribute to the well being of millions of people are simple and accessible.

The cost-benefit analysis of good vision remains an unexplored domain.

Certain consequences linked to a lack of vision correction are recognized, but in an irregular manner. For example:

- **The loss in economic productivity** worldwide caused **each year** by poor vision in workers is estimated in a study by WHO (The World Health Organization) at **US\$269 billion, equaling more than 1 billion dollars per working day.**
- **The medical costs directly linked to hip fractures** due to falls caused by poor vision in elderly people are estimated in a study by Boston Consulting Group to be **343 million dollars per year in the USA**, or almost 1 million dollars per day.
- A study by the U.S. Census Bureau established in 2007 **that a child showing signs of uncorrected poor vision** during his or her schooling **earns, during the entire duration of his or her active life, on average 440 dollars less** each month than a child who sees well (source : U.S. Census Bureau Estimates of Vision Loss Costs).

The Vision Impact Institute, created in March of 2013, began its work in collecting available studies across the world on the socio-economic impacts of uncorrected poor vision.

It has already gathered more than 90 recent studies that shed light on the problems in the four main population categories, currently the most well studied: **children, elderly, workers and drivers.**

The collection also reveals **the gaps in the knowledge on the subject** concerning certain countries and/or certain populations. For example, **the data seems to be completely lacking on the specific situation of women or that of adolescents**, while the use of screens in adolescents is particularly developed.

“This is a long term approach and the Institute will encourage all research allowing better evaluation of the socio-economic costs of poor vision, everywhere in the world,” states Jean-Félix Biosse Duplan, President of the Vision Impact Institute. *“We call on scientists and opinion leaders for them to raise awareness of the major problem that is poor vision.”*

Created as an initiative of the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1998, World Sight Day is one day every year dedicated to calling the attention of the public and professionals to the importance of good vision.

By distributing data from the studies collected, the Vision Impact Institute wishes to contribute to the indispensable awareness.

The Vision Impact Institute’s mission is to collect and make accessible data on the impact of poor vision in order to alert opinion leaders, public organizations, and vision professionals about the socio-economic consequences caused by this issue and about the solutions that can be dispersed.

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To learn more on the Vision Impact Institute: visionimpactinstitute.org