

**World Blind Union – International Committee For
Indigenous Blind People**



Strategic Plan for Mr Maaka Tibble – Committee Chairperson

1. Mission Statement

The International Committee for Indigenous Blind People will promote the development of partnerships that will foster dialogue, build understanding, explore ways of advancing reconciliation and addressing economic and social problems affecting Indigenous peoples in a united effort which respects the land, values the Indigenous heritage, language and culture, and provides justice and equity for all.

2. Definition

Indigenous people are those people who were native to a land prior to colonisation by mainly Western cultures and are not usually governed by themselves nor do they have international membership entitlement as a nation of people.

3. Objectives to 2004

- (a) To develop terms of reference to guide the Committee in developing a strategy for inclusion, and to develop protocols for reporting and accountability.
- (b) To hold forums in conjunction with the General Assemblies to examine issues affecting blind and visually impaired indigenous people and develop solutions and strategies for resolving the issues.

- (c) To share information and resources and build upon successful and sustainable outcomes that improve the condition of blind and visually impaired people's lives.

4. Objectives For 2001/2002

- (a) To develop contacts with leading Indigenous blind people's advocacy and service groups in those countries where there are significant numbers of Indigenous blind or visually impaired people who are sufficiently organised to attend the World Blind Union forum and similar conferences.
- (b) To develop a register of the issues faced by Indigenous blind or visually impaired people in retaining land, values, language and culture in the face of pressures to assimilate into the culture of the major provider of services to blind people in their country.
- (c) To organise a series of conferences, both gatherings of representatives and remote discussion groups communicating through technological media, to agree on the range of issues facing Indigenous blind people in maintaining their unique culture while improving the condition of their lives, and to prioritise these issues.

4. Strategies to Achieve Objectives

In pursuing these objectives it will be necessary for all organisations of Indigenous blind people to retain the good will of the member organisations of the World Blind Union, particularly the government agencies of the member nations who are responsible for the provision of basic rehabilitation and mobility services to blind people. It will also be necessary to encourage the appropriate government agencies of the member nations to provide

practical and/or financial assistance to enable the local organisations of Indigenous blind people to take part in this initiative. Therefore an important strategy is:

- (a) To develop a clear statement of the purpose of the International Committee of Indigenous Blind People, and its objectives during the next three or four years, and to communicate this in a positive way to the member nations of the World Blind Union.

The development of contacts with organisations of Indigenous Blind People will require people who have or are able to acquire quite rapidly the skill and knowledge to undertake correspondence and conduct conversations which will result in the cooperation of the international organisations. These people will also require training in the organisation of information into a format which will allow the type of analysis envisaged in these objectives. Another important strategy is:

- (b) To gain sufficient funding from New Zealand to support this activity in this "International Decade of Indigenous Peoples" through the establishment of an Office for the International Committee of the World Blind Union during the term of the current Chairperson, with sufficient trained staff to meet these objectives.

In order for the International Committee of Indigenous Blind People to achieve and maintain the degree of communication required to meet its objectives for 2001/2002 it will require the use of modern communications facilities. These will include computers and word processors with voice programmes as well as audio taping and high speed reproduction facilities for taped communications, as well as the internet and other

telecommunications facilities. A statement of this strategy is:

- (c) To gain access, through sponsorship or ownership, of appropriate communications technology which will enable the achievement of these objectives.