



CIBA Vision/Optometry Giving Sight

A chance to see

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At a glance

Issue

- Some 250 million people around the world are blind or visually impaired because they don't have access to an eye exam and the right pair of glasses.

Objectives

- To partner with Optometry Giving Sight (OGS), a global fundraising initiative, in expanding access to quality eye care services in the world's most needy areas.
- To engage optometrists and their patients in supporting the effort.
- To make a positive impact in emerging markets by supporting the delivery of eye care services, including eye exams, glasses and low vision devices, training of professionals, and creation of an infrastructure of eye care clinics and teaching facilities.

Activities

- Working with optometrists to spur participation by professionals and their patients in fundraising activities.
- Helping develop the OGS website, formulate guidelines for funding of projects, and expand company participation in specific OGS efforts.
- Utilizing company sales and marketing teams, professional meetings and individual contacts with customers to spur participation.

Results

- Serves as a powerful motivator for sales and marketing organizations in 40 countries.
- Opens up a range of opportunities to collaborate with key customers on this important non-commercial enterprise.
- Funds eye exams and glasses for those who cannot afford them
 - including more than 30 000 Sri Lankans so far.
- Supports vision programs in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and South Africa.
- Raises funds in the US, Canada, the UK, Australia, the Netherlands and Italy for Optometry Giving Sight. Plans are being formulated to introduce the program in Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Germany, New Zealand and South Africa.

A chance to see

Some 250 million people around the world are blind or visually impaired because they lack access to an eye exam and the right pair of glasses. CIBA Vision is partnering with Optometry Giving Sight in an effort to give these people a chance to see.

In 2005, CIBA Vision became the first corporation to partner globally with Optometry Giving Sight (OGS), a fundraising campaign that reaches out to optometrists around the world and their patients. CIBA Vision made a five-year commitment of USD 1 million to OGS, plus funding a full-time Optometry Giving Sight Corporate Fellowship position – an industry first. The partnership is meant to help people in all parts of the world gain access to regular, quality vision care services.

Treatable or preventable blindness accounts for 75% of cases globally; 90% of avoidable blindness occurs in the developing world. People in developing countries are ten times more likely to be blind or visually impaired than those in the developed world. Impaired vision often keeps people from going to school, working and providing for their families, compounding their poverty.

In 2005, CIBA Vision became the first corporation to partner globally with Optometry Giving Sight (OGS), a global fundraising campaign that extends help to more than 200 000 optometrists around the world and their patients.

CIBA Vision made a five-year commitment of USD 1 million to OGS as a Global Founding Corporate Patron in 2005, plus funding a full-time Optometry Giving Sight Corporate Fellowship position – an industry first.

The partnership helps CIBA Vision live its mission to provide ‘better eyes for a better life.’ The company sees one of its responsibilities to the global community as helping people in all parts of the world gain access to regular, quality vision care services.

Broad expertise range

OGS focuses on countries with a shortage of trained eye care personnel and little or no infrastructure to support desperately needed services.

OGS funds support the delivery of eye care services, including exams, low-cost eye glasses and low vision devices; training for optometrists, eye care personnel and their teachers; as well as establishment and support for eye

clinics and schools of optometry. OGS is the only global initiative that specifically targets the prevention of blindness due to refractive error.

OGS is a collaboration of the World Optometry Foundation, the International Centre for Eyecare Education (ICEE), and the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB). It supports the goals of VISION 2020: The Right to Sight, an initiative of the IAPB and the World Health Organization that seeks to eliminate avoidable blindness by the year 2020.

Funds are raised through individual donations from optometrists and their staffs, from patients as well as from corporate sponsorships and general donations.

Up-close and personal

In 2006 Kristie Madara, vice president of global corporate communications for CIBA Vision, became the first Optometry Giving Sight Corporate Fellow – and gained a personal, up-close view of OGS at work.

Based in Sydney, Australia, Kristie’s responsibilities as a Fellow included developing a global outreach plan to promote the OGS mission and building relationships with stakeholders such as governments, NGOs, professional associations and industry. Among other things, she worked with OGS to update and improve its website (www.givingsight.org), create corporate sponsorship guidelines and develop project grant guidelines.

Programs across the world

Sri Lanka, where healthcare and vision care problems were aggravated by the devastating Tsunami in 2004, is one of the OGS program sites. Many children and adults in Sri Lanka are functionally blind or visually impaired because they don’t have access to an eye exam and a pair of glasses. OGS has focused some of its efforts on providing eye care clinics to thousands of tea workers, who rely on vision for their livelihoods. To date, funding from OGS has provided eye exams and glasses to more than 30 000 Sri Lankans.

One young Sri Lankan girl, for example, had never had an eye exam until an International Centre for Eye Care Education optometrist, funded by OGS, visited her village. The exam revealed she couldn’t see even four inches in front of her face. As a result, the girl was fitted with corrective glasses and given the gift of sight.

In Malawi, a program funded by OGS and coordinated by Sightsavers International and the International Centre for Eye Care Education found that, of 120 children in a program for the blind, only seven were actually blind. Thirty-six simply needed glasses, and 52 needed low vision devices to help them see. One problem that becomes clear from such surveys is the lack of eye care personnel to do complicated refractions. A second problem is a shortage of resources to manufacture and provide complicated prescription devices at affordable prices. The work funded by CIBA Vision will help change that.

Similar programs are underway in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. Initially, children already in blindness programs will be screened, and appropriate glasses and low vision devices will be provided. In each country, the initial phase is expected to cost USD 200 000. A second phase will train teachers to conduct visual screenings and develop local eye care personnel. A third phase will establish infrastructure to ensure accessible and affordable glasses and low vision devices.

A program in South Africa finds OGS targeting funds to the National Refractive Error Program (NREP), which facilitates private-public sector collaboration between the Department of Health and private optometrists. The plan, developed by the International Centre for Eye Care Education, aims to quickly increase access to eye care in the public sector in South Africa.

OGS fundraising efforts are underway in the US, Canada, the UK, Australia, the Netherlands and Italy. Plans are being formulated to introduce the program in other countries where optometrists have expressed interest including Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Germany, New Zealand and South Africa.

Business case

While serving humanitarian needs around the world, the CIBA Vision partnership with OGS also aligns strategically with the company's business:

- A strong commitment to corporate citizenship is at core of the values and actions of CIBA Vision. The OGS relationship provides an unprecedented opportunity to assist populations in desperate need of the benefits of optometry. The alliance helps distinguish CIBA Vision as a socially responsible organization that goes above and beyond everyday business to focus on broader concerns affecting patients and professionals.
- The funding of a Corporate Fellow position offers a full-time CIBA Vision employee the challenge of working with OGS for a year on fundraising and project development. This creates a unique developmental opportunity for potential leaders in CIBA Vision's organization, providing executives

with a broader understanding of the role corporate citizenship plays in enhancing relationships and behaving responsibly in the world. Further, by committing the resources of CIBA Vision's sales and marketing teams in nearly 40 countries, the alliance serves as a powerful motivator for associates and an important opportunity to create broader and deeper relationships with customers.

- The alliance has strengthened CIBA Vision's relationships with key customers – optometrists – by providing opportunities for conversations about OGS at trade shows, in professional meetings and during regular sales contacts. A number of CIBA Vision country organizations, including Australia, Canada, the US and Benelux, are actively promoting OGS in addition to CIBA Vision's industry-leading participation.
- OGS is a global enterprise – as is CIBA Vision – and offers an opportunity to broaden the company's presence and relationships in emerging global markets as well as in established areas.
- OGS promotes CIBA Vision's participation on its website and in other informational materials – enhancing the company's reputation with customers and the patient community well beyond the company's commercial efforts.

About CIBA Vision

CIBA Vision is a global leader in research, development and manufacturing of optical and ophthalmic products and services, including contact lenses and lens care products. It is part of the Consumer Health Division of Novartis and employs more than 6 000 people around the world. For more information: www.Cibavision.com

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