



SERVICE PROJECT SHEET Sight Savers International



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First published by RIBI: pre-1999/2000

Project Name:

SSI International Comprehensive Eye Services SSI Rotary's African Vision
(Registered Charity 207544)

Project goal:

To prevent blindness, restore sight and to support blind people.

Rotary service type:

Fund raising, supporting fund raising events and speaking on behalf of Sight Savers. During the Rotary year 2005/2006, Sight Savers and RIBI celebrated 30 years of partnership. To mark the occasion, Sight Savers organised a 'Rotary Mountain Challenge' in June 2006, to which all 29 Rotary districts were encouraged to enter a team.

Unique selling proposition:

Value for money - for just £17 you can restore sight through a cataract operation.

Description:

Also known as The Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind, Sight Savers' name reflects the work it undertakes. There are two centres to SSI's programmes supported by clubs in RIBI - India and Africa. Both centres need funds, but particularly Africa.

1. India - Comprehensive Eye Service (CES)



Until a few years ago, the only eye care available through much of India was through Eye Camps, which clubs throughout RIBI supported steadfastly from the early 1970s when the SSI/RIBI programme in India began. Out of this Eye Camp programme Sight Savers has been able to support its partners over the last decade or so to improve the level of service offered to the local community, and so was born CES – Comprehensive Eye Service programmes. Support from clubs in RIBI to SSI's work in India is allocated to the CES share scheme.

A CES serves a specific community which may vary in size from 500,000 to 2.5 million people, depending upon the particular local circumstances. A CES provides a one-stop service for all sight-related problems and includes diagnostic eye screening camps, preventative and curative treatment, surgery and refraction as appropriate for people with an eye problem. It also provides advice and referral for blind people who could benefit from rehabilitation training and in the case of blind children the support they need to attend mainstream school. The aim of CES is for no one to go away without receiving the help they need.

Each year a CES partner with a Rotary link in India is selected to receive donations from Rotary clubs. Each club providing a donation of £250 or more will receive a fact-finding report about the programme supported by the club.

2. Rotary's African Vision

Rotary's African Vision (RAV) concentrates on training, equipping and deploying essential eye care workers. Training centres in Malawi, Ghana and Uganda, RAV helps to fund an additional year of training for qualified and experienced nurses from all over Africa to become ophthalmic paramedics.



When they graduate, they are often the only people in a hospital with specialist eye care expertise, and without them many eye care problems would go untreated. They can treat 60%-80% of the patients that they see, only referring serious cases to Africa's few and hard-pressed ophthalmologists.

RAV also supports the African Braille Centre (ABC) in Nairobi, Kenya, which provides Braille textbooks for blind students, using computer technology. These books are essential if students are to succeed at school.

Other Sight Savers projects:

Alternatively, Rotary clubs can support Sight Savers' general work to prevent and cure blindness in other developing countries - SightSavers works in 32 countries altogether in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean.

Sight Savers can provide speakers, literature and promotional material and will also help with PR and media coverage if required.

Personalities supporting project:

- President: Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra
- Sir Nicholas Fenn GCMG
- Sir John Coles GCMG
- Sir Mark Tully

Benefits to club:

This is a really worthwhile project, where funds go a long way. SSI acknowledges RIBI support in their literature and on their website.

Feedback from clubs:

- Rotary Club of Solihull
- Rotary Club of Ely



Contact for further information:

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Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland has adopted this statement of policy for its work with children, the elderly, the vulnerable and those with disability. The needs and rights of the child, the elderly, the vulnerable and persons with disability take priority. It is the duty of every Rotarian to safeguard to the best of his or her ability, the welfare of and prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse and neglect of all children, the elderly, persons with disability or otherwise vulnerable persons with whom they come into contact in their Rotarian duties. Rotarians should refer to the detailed "RIBI Protection Policy" when planning events and activities.