

**HELPING MAMA SANTES TO BECOME
SCOJO VISION ENTREPRENEURS IN RURAL GHANA**



PROPOSAL TO CLEAR FUND BY SCOJO FOUNDATION

CAUSE 2: HELP PEOPLE IN AFRICA BECOME SELF-SUPPORTING

I. LIST OF PROGRAMS

Visionary Social Entrepreneurship

As we age, almost all of us will lose our ability to see up close. But for the more than 700 million people living in poverty who don't have access to reading glasses, the loss of near vision can mean the loss of livelihood. For tailors, electricians, goldsmiths, and others whose precarious working lives depend on their ability to see up close, the lack of access to reading glasses can have disastrous economic consequences. A pair of low-cost reading glasses, long available in every drugstore in the United States, can restore their vision and double their productivity, yet this simple, life-changing product has not yet made its way into the hands of those who live on less than \$4 a day.

Scojo Foundation is a non-profit social enterprise that improves the economic condition of families in the developing world by broadening access to affordable reading glasses. Committed to employing market-based solutions to solve this global issue, Scojo Foundation has developed a replicable, scalable, microfranchise model. Scojo Vision Entrepreneurs are low-income men and women trained to conduct vision screenings within their communities, sell affordable reading glasses, and refer those who require advanced eye care to reputable clinics. Each Scojo Vision Entrepreneur receives his or her own "Business in a Bag," a sales kit containing all the products and materials needed for vision screening, sales, data collection, and marketing, and receives ongoing support from staff. With blueprints for success, Scojo Vision Entrepreneurs run profitable businesses, earning more than twice their previous daily income on each pair of glasses sold.

Recognizing the massive scale of the population in need of reading glasses, Scojo Foundation empowers Franchise Partners, or partner organizations with existing distribution networks to reach the rural poor, to implement Scojo's Vision Entrepreneur model in the communities in which they work. Scojo Foundation provides the tools, knowledge, products, and support for Franchise Partners to implement Scojo microfranchises, adding both profit and social value to established programs. Scojo Foundation currently works with nearly 30 Franchise Partners, from small NGOs to large multi-national corporations, in India, Bangladesh, Ghana, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Mexico. With over 1,000 Vision Entrepreneurs who have sold over 70,000 pairs of reading glasses and referred over 72,000 people for advanced eye care, Scojo Foundation is closer than ever to achieving its goal of providing access to affordable reading glasses for all.

Country Programs

- Bangladesh: Franchise Partnership with BRAC
- El Salvador: Scojo Foundation Field Office
- **Ghana: Franchise Partnership with Freedom from Hunger (Featured Program)**
- Guatemala: Franchise Partnership with Soluciones Comunitarias
- India: Scojo Foundation Field Office and Franchise Partnerships with over 15 organizations across five states.
- Mexico: Franchise Partnership with One Roof Mexico
- Pan-Africa: Distribution Partnership with Population Services International (PSI), initial launch in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania.

II. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES AND BUDGET FOR FEATURED PROGRAM

A. Activities of featured program:

Scojo Foundation's Franchise Partnership with Freedom from Hunger was launched in early 2007. The focus of the partnership is for Freedom from Hunger's Microbusiness in Health program to train local female entrepreneurs across Ghana to sell reading glasses in their communities. In addition to Scojo's eye health products, the entrepreneurs, called Mama Santes, sell other health products such as insecticide treated bed nets, condoms, and oral rehydration salts.

Participants in the program are senior-level borrowers from Freedom from Hunger local microcredit partners in Ghana. To begin selling reading glasses, participants undergo an initial 3-day training in which they learn how to recognize presbyopia, or blurry up-close vision, help customers choose the appropriate strength of reading glasses for their age and type of work, and make referrals for more advanced eye conditions to partner eye care hospitals. They also learn basic sales and marketing skills, such as coordinating with local leaders to run eye screening campaigns and following up with potential customers who express interest in purchasing glasses but do not immediately make a purchase. In addition, they learn to manage inventory, fill out customer information forms, and generate general eye care awareness.

Scojo Foundation's program provides a needed service to rural Ghanaians, as low-cost reading glasses are not available to people who need them to work. At the same time, we provide an opportunity for entrepreneurial women to sell a health product to their communities, earning extra income to support their families and providing a needed service to their communities. This added income and professional training elevates the status of these women within their communities.

The first cadre of 11 Vision Entrepreneurs has begun to sell reading glasses in the regions of Bawjiase and Somanya. By the end of 2008, our goal is for Freedom from Hunger to be fully managing their own Scojo Franchise and to be members of a forum to share best practices with other Scojo partners around the world. Freedom from Hunger's goal is to reach over 80% of rural Ghana within 5 years. With support from The Clear Fund, Freedom from Hunger can train 20 new entrepreneurs and sell 2500 pairs of low-cost reading glasses to rural Ghanaians.

B. People served by the program:

Scojo Foundation's model provides a blueprint for success for low-income women to run their own businesses, yet running a business still requires a certain level of commitment and drive from the owner to be successful. As such, Scojo Foundation has developed a set of criteria by which we select Vision Entrepreneurs in Ghana, including:

- Female
- Motivation to make sales and earn income
- A good reputation and credibility in their communities
- Basic literacy to fill out inventory and customer information forms
- Ability to travel to neighboring villages (no children under the age of 2)
- Outgoing personality

Scojo Foundation works with Freedom from Hunger Ghana to facilitate introductions to senior-level borrower in their microfinance organizations. Typically, their loan officer will recommend them to the program because of the traits they have demonstrated as borrowers and their interest in selling health products to earn additional income.

III. Evaluation for featured program (one page maximum, except for attachments to part B).

A. What is your process for evaluating the effects of the featured program on clients' abilities to become economically self-supporting?

Scojo Foundation and Freedom from Hunger closely monitor programs based on a specific set of indicators to measure effectiveness. Scojo Foundation uses a web-based database called Salesforce to track all sales, customer, inventory, and Vision Entrepreneur information, including personal information on each woman, how many products she has sold, and the increase in her income since joining. As a result of being a Scojo Franchise Partner, Freedom from Hunger staff have access to Salesforce to help them track their sales data and compare it to other Scojo programs around the world. Below is a chart of Scojo Foundation's evaluation indicators:

<i>Indicator</i>
of glasses sold
of jobs created
% increase in income of Vision Entrepreneurs
of people referred for further testing
of entrepreneurs trained
of advertising/marketing campaigns conducted
% of cost recovered by Franchise Partner (Freedom from Hunger)

B. Impact Reports

At this time there are no written impact reports about Scojo Foundation's program in Ghana as the program has just moved from its pilot phase into a full-scale program. However, as the program moves forward Scojo Foundation will work closely with Freedom from Hunger to evaluate the program according to these indicators and make any appropriate changes to maximize impact, as it does with all other programs.

In addition, we are currently working with the William Davidson Institute at the University of Michigan on a social impact study of our work. While focused on India, the lessons learned from this study will be largely applicable in Ghana and Africa as a whole.

IV. Optional: other support for featured program

Scojo Foundation's work in India was recently the subject of a World Resources Institute What Works case study, a series that offers in-depth analyses of businesses that are successful in serving the 4 billion people whose incomes place them at the base of the world's economic pyramid. The case study, *What Works: Scojo India Foundation*, authored by Sachin Kadakia and Nico Clemminck of Columbia Business School, is an analysis of Scojo India Foundation's business model and best practices. Though not specific to Africa, the case study offers useful insight into Scojo Foundation's Vision Entrepreneur and Franchise Partner models. It is available for download here:

<http://www.scojofoundation.org/materials/What-Works-Scojo-India.pdf>

V. Confidentiality. Please be specific about any part of this application that you would like to remain confidential. We believe transparency and public accountability are extremely important, and in general we have a preference to recommend and fund charities that are committed to sharing the details of their work as much as possible. However, this commitment is only one factor in our decision-making process, and we will respect any requests you make regarding confidentiality.

We would like to keep the specific line items for salaries confidential. If possible, please only make the summary sections of the budget public.