

# Executive Committee sets Policy on Endorsements

We have had inquiries from our members requesting that our Action Group officially “endorse, sponsor, and/or support” developing projects and or initiatives (fund raising endeavors) being sponsored by clubs(s) or district(s) of our Action Group members. As there was no Action Group policy regarding this, it has been difficult for our leadership to address these requests. However, with the October 2006 RI Board of Directors requirement that the ByLaws of all Action Groups be revised to comply with the new RI Standard ByLaws for Action Groups, our Executive Committee has reviewed this matter and developed an endorsement policy based on the following ruling from Rotary International as provided to our Chairman.

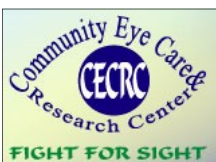
*Djenne Clayton, Corporate Counsel at RI has confirmed that it is “Inappropriate for a fellowship or Action Group to endorse a product because it may give the impression that Rotary International as a whole is endorsing a specific product / service / business, etc. and would therefore not be in compliance with RI Policy.” (This includes any initiative being sponsored by a Rotary club(s) or district(s) which purpose is to raise funds to purchase a specific product(s) for a specific use.)*

Based on the above opinion and the October 2006 RI Board of Directors Decisions relating to Action Groups, and additional information provided by the RI Staff (use of Action Group name, logos, etc.) our Executive Committee on 12/13/06 adopted the following policy:

*The Rotarian Action Group for Blindness Prevention shall not “officially endorse, sponsor or support” any product, project or initiative presented to the Action Group by an active member of the Action Group or other Rotarian and shall not approve the use of the Action Group Name and/or logo in conjunction with any such endeavor in advertising, promotional material, or other documents (including various media). These endeavors shall be posted on the Action Group web site on either the “Projects Seeking Partners” page or the “Developing Initiatives” page for interested individuals to pursue on their own with a disclaimer on each page clearly stating that the endeavor is not officially endorsed, sponsored or supported by the Action Group and that the posting of the endeavor is for information purposes only.*

Until the RI Board of Directors approves endorsements of this type, our Action Group will continue to follow the guidelines as stated in the Manual of Procedure and the Code of Policies of RI. Following are two endeavors which have recently been presented to us.

## COMMUNITY EYE CARE & RESEARCH CENTER



The “Community Eye Care and Research Center” was established in August 2000 as an eye care service organization in Rangpur, a district in northern Bangladesh.

The Center has a refraction outreach program; treats various diseases of the eye; offers a complete

surgical facility; performs cataract operations, provides training to volunteers and staff operating in the field and also provides low cost eyeglasses in addition to various other programs through outreach and in the clinic.



The Center depends on individual donors and TRF Matching Grants to provide its services. They have a brochure which details how you can become involved either through outright donations or a TRF-MG project. We have added this to our web site under “Projects Seeking Partners” because of the TRF-MG capability. By participating you will be helping to provide free cataract surgeries for those in need. For additional information please contact Dr. Khairul Islam, Executive Director of the clinic, at [cecrc@tistaonline.com](mailto:cecrc@tistaonline.com) You can also visit their web site at <http://www.cecrc.org>

## ROTARY OPHTHALMIC INITIATIVE (ROI)



The ROI, a project of the Rotary Club of Stevenage Grange (UK) and Rotary District 1260 supports VISION 2020 and the IAPB\* and aims to eliminate blindness for millions of people by the year 2020. Facilitating the donation of low cost, pen-sized, lens-free ophthalmoscopes to eye care charities operating in developing countries, it provides a simple and cost effective way for Rotarians worldwide to help save the sight, lives and livelihood of many people.

The Optyse™ ophthalmoscope is being used for this initiative. Its simple design and ease of use means that the instrument’s diagnostic capabilities can be used readily in the field to detect both sight-threatening and other medical conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and cerebral malaria.



The Optyse™, which normally retails for \$95 (US\$) is being made available to the ROI for \$50 (US\$). They will be distributed free of charge to all recipients. No profit is realized by the RC of Stevenage Grange or any Rotarian as a result of this initiative.

For more information on this initiative, please visit their web site at <http://www.roisight.org> or contact Stephen Sypula at [stephen@sgrc.org.uk](mailto:stephen@sgrc.org.uk) You can download various documents and view videos related to the initiative on our Action Group web site on the “Developing Initiatives” page.

\*International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness.