

Attention:

Rigoberta Menchú Tum, The RMT Fundation, Eduardo de León, Paul Menchú, Mayra Solis, YMCA-Guatemala, Dr. Alejandro Fuentes, Susana Barrios Beltranena, Mario Antonio Sandoval, Safe Passage, Rachel Meyn, Kristen F. Pierce, Dr. Derek Feifke, The Guatemalan Embassy in Sweden, Lions, The Swedish Optometry Association, Synoptik, Vision For All.

*... y mis ojos deslumbrados
descubren cada mañana
horizontes nuevos ...*

*... And my dazzled eyes
discover each morning
new horizons ...*

- Julia Esquivel V. -

"Your land",

(Guatemalan / Poet and Theologian)

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

It is quite true, as indicated by the Poet, that good visual acuity is indispensable for a persons development. It gives us our pleasure, therefore, to present this report on the total work done in Guatemala between April 15 – 23, 2008.

I would like to thank, in the name of Vision For All, and of our four members, all who were involved in giving us full attention and all the help during our stay.

Always attentive and in Solidarity,

John J Godoy
Optometrist
President, Vision For All

A Delegation of 2 optometrists and 2 assistants with luggage filled with optometric equipment and frames travelled to Guatemala to do eye exams and provide good, used eyeglasses to people with limited economic resources.



Those who could pay, were charged between 5 and 10 Quetzales (approx. \$0,75 - \$1.25 USD) if they needed eyeglasses (one or two pair). Those who could not afford it were not denied our services. However nothing should be completely free and it did help cover some of the costs.



* VFA attended only 822 people between April 15 -23, 2008. VFA could have attended double the amount but for reason out of our control, the desired number of patients did not arrived either in Tactic nor at Safe Passages local. In San Pedro Carchá, Tactic, we attended only 287 patients in 3 days (96 pat. / day).

In the City of Guatemala, with the organization "Safe Passage", who works with families that live of the large city dump, one days work provided only 66 patients. We mention this only to express our frustrations that we were not able to do more.





However, we were successful with the Foundation “Rigoberta Menchú Tum” working in Amatitlan, Tierra Nueva and Sakerti, VFA and being able to help 469 patients in 3 days (156 pat. / 3 day).

* Of the 822 attended, 565 (68,7%) were women, 257 (31,3%) men.

* Of the 565 women only 185 (32,7%) said that they were

lucky to have some work, while two out of three, 380 (67,3%), had no salary at all. With regards the men, over half the men, that is 150 (58,4%), were fortunate to have work. This unjust discrepancy between men and women is another reason why VFA is disposed to support more women.



* The majority of those attended were 35 years and older, 496 (60,4%) and they needed at least one, if not two, pair of glasses. 251 (30,5%) were young adults between 20-35; 69 (8,4%) were between the ages 8-19 and only six (0,7%) were less than 8 years of age. The reason why we attended so few minors is because the eyeglasses we had to donate were for adults.

* Of the total of 761 pair of eyeglasses distributed, 678 (89.1%) were to correct hypermetropia or presbyopia. Only 83 (10,9%) pair were for myopia or for a myopic shift due to cataracts.

* About 45 pair of sunglasses and some 25 empty frames were provided, the later for the following reasons:

1. If the prescription of the actual eyeglasses were still good, well then they were given an empty frame in case their present frame would break at some point. It is quiet inexpensive to reglaze the lenses into the new frames in Guatemala.

2. They received a large pair of good, used eyeglasses which did not really fit their small faces. Accordingly, they also received a smaller, empty frame



which they could take with them to an optician, pay a small fee and have the large lenses reglazed into the smaller frames.

* Three out of every four pair distributed, 543 (71,4 %) were within the ranges of +1,00 - +3,75.

* Of the 678 pair of positive eyeglasses provided, 553 (81,6%) were for near use (to read, clean the rice, sew ...). 125 pair (18,4%) were for distance.



* In contrary, of the 83 pair to correct myopia, only three (3,6%) pair were for near work and 80 (96,4%) pair were for distance. The reason most likely for this discrepancy is that most of the myopic adults take off their eyeglasses to do any near work.

* A number of eye pathologies were observed and referred (when eye

doctors were available such as in San Pedro Carchá and Tactic) – Cataracts, Glaucoma, Ptyregium, Strabismus, Entropion, Extropion, AMD, and all sorts of eye traumas.

If we calculate that an eye exam and a pair of eyeglasses cost in average \$150.00 USD in Sweden, we could set a value on Vision For Alls work at:

822 people attended x \$150.00 USD = \$123 300.00 USD !!!

Not bad for a weeks work !

The high point of the trip aside from helping those we could, was meeting Rigoberta Menchú Tum, activist for Indigenous Rights in Guatemala and 1992 Nobel Peace Prize Recipient. We signed a three year Contract between her Foundation and Vision For All to visit indigenous communities isolated in the countryside and provide them with primary eye care.



For the eyeglasses we would like to thank the people of Sweden and the many active Lions Clubs in our country and in the United States of America to Optometrist Dr. Derek Feifke, president of VOSH-ONE for permitting us to purchase inexpensive reading eyeglasses. For the logistical and economic help we thank the "Rigoberta Menchú Tum" Foundation, Dr. Alejandro Fuentes, Susana Barrios Beltranena, Lions, Optikerförbundet, Synoptik and all the members of Vision For All.



We hope our mutual work will continue to develop and improve and as the old Mayan Codices read from the Pop Wuj:

*...Que se permita
que la madrugada se
levante,
que venga la
aurora,
que todos los
pueblos tengan paz y
estén felices..."*

*That the early morning be allowed to break
come the dawn of day,
that all the peoples enjoy peace and happiness...*

In Solidarity,

John J. Godoy, Optometrist
President of Vision For All

Totalt 822 pat.

Statistics from / *Estadísticas de*
Guatemala – VFA Sweden

(April 15-23, 2008)

<u>Age: / Edad</u> # / Cantidad	Women <i>Mujeres</i> ♀ ?	Tot.	Men <i>Hombres</i> ♂ ?	Tot.
under 8 (<i>menos de ..</i>)	3		3	0,7%
8 - 19	44		25	8,4%
20 - 35	177		74	30,6%
36 - 49	137		62	24,2%
50 - 65	155		59	26,0%
over 65: (<i>más de ...</i>)	49		34	10,1%
Tot. =	565 68,7%		257 31,3%	100%

Cover Test: ♀ ? ♂ ?		Has wages? <i>Tiene sueldo?</i> ♀ ? ♂ ?	
.. fori: orto...		Sí:	185 150
eso...		☺ Yes	32,7% 58,4%
exo...		No:	380 107
. tropi: eso...		☹	67,3% 41,6%
exo...			

Total: 761 eyeglasses
April 15-23, 2008



VFA –Sweden
Statistics from Guatemala



Plus lenses / Lentes convexo + tot. +

Ordinerade styrkor (La medida dada)	Women Mujeres		Tot.	Men Hombres		Tot.
	dist. / lejos	Near / cerca		dist. / lejos	near / cerca	
± 0, sunglasses	30	19		15	13	
+0,25 D - +0,75 D	13	14		2	4	
+1,00 D - +1,25 D	23	97		15	35	
+1,50 D - +1,75 D	11	34		3	20	
+2,0 D - +2,25 D	9	85		2	38	
+2,50 D - +2,75 D	0	50		0	18	
+3,00 D - +3,75 D	1	74		0	28	
+4,0 D - +4,75 D	0	15		1	6	
+5,0 D - +6,75 D	0	1		0	2	
+7,0 D - ∞	0	0		0	0	
Tot. =	87	389	476	38	164	202

Minus lenses / Lentes cóncavo - tot. -

-0,25 D - -3,25 D	45	1		22	0	
-3,50 - ∞	10	2		3	0	
Tot. =	55	3	58	25	0	25

Sabe leer? † ?		Can read? † ?		OBS: † ?		† ?
Sí:	433	219		Pinguecula	12	10
☺ Yes:	76,6%	85,2%		Pterygium	17	7
No:	132	38		Cataract	34	6
☹	23,4%	14,8%		Amblyopia	7	4

Post – Evaluation

About 3 months ago, VFA offered an eye examination and eyeglasses to you. Now we would like to know how well the eyeglasses have functioned.

Country: City: Date:

1. Man: Woman: Age:

2. Do you know how to read and write?
Yes No

3. Are you satisfied with your eyeglasses?
Yes No

4. You have eyeglasses for ...
far. near. both.

5. How have these eyeglasses bettered your life?
.....

6. Have you had any negative consequences do to your eyeglasses?
.....

7. What can VFA do better next time?
.....

8. Any other comments?
.....

Thank you for your participation!