



MISSION 2016 MIRAGOANE, HAITI





**MISSION
ACCOMPLISHED
FOR THE IRIS
MUNDIAL
VOLUNTEERS
A RAY OF
HOPE IN
MIRAGOANE...**

On May 3rd, IRIS Mundial volunteers returned from Haiti with a strong sense of accomplishment. 1,725 individuals were examined in the course of this one-week mission in Miragoane, a small town about three hours away from Port-au-Prince, the capital. The people live in precarious conditions and their visual needs are great as there were no eye care services in the area until the arrival of the IRIS Mundial team.

PASSIONATE PROFESSIONALS SERVING DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE

This one-week project was a great success. We are delighted and proud of the work done by our multidisciplinary team of **28 Canadian and Haitian volunteers**. After transporting the luggage, equipment, eyewear and medication trays, the team moved into the Miragoane Ste-Therese Hospital premises at the top of the hill overlooking the city, offering an exceptional view of the port and the sea. A large crowd would await them each morning for the team, making the work more challenging. Ophthalmologists, optometrists, opticians, a medical doctor, nurses and assistants worked tirelessly, for long days, despite the heat, always in synergy and harmony and with incredible energy. Haitian nurses and assistants working for the IRIS Mondial permanent eye care programs in Limbe and Labrousse also joined the Canadian team, to share knowledge and facilitate communication with the beneficiaries whose first language is Creole.

Globally, 80%
of all visual
impairment
can be
prevented
or cured.

Source: World Health Organization - 2015.



VISION CARE FOR 1725 PEOPLE

It would have taken much more than five days to meet all the patients in need. **The volunteer professionals examined more than 1,725 people, and 1,500 of them received prescription eyewear**, which will allow some to work, others to study or simply help them carry out their daily activities. For most of them, it was their first eyewear. The waiting time was long for the many needy patients. Some walked for several hours under a blazing sun to reach us, using almost impassable roads due to the rainy season. All received sun protection against ultraviolet radiation, which often leads to cataracts and/or pterygium in this region located around the sea. These conditions can lead to blindness for those who do not receive eye care services. 300 patients among these were fortunate enough to receive new sunglasses from Maui Jim, a gift from the supplier!

"What a joy to see her smile when she discovered the distant and close letters. It was like a ray of sunshine."

Dr. Marie-France Duguay,
optometrist.



CHANGING LIVES THROUGH THE GIFT OF SIGHT

1725 stories could be told thanks to the colossal work of this caring, devoted and determined volunteer team providing quality health care to disadvantaged people. It's through little stories that our intervention makes sense, when lives are transformed by the gift of sight ... Chrisbeline, a seven year-old girl, received prescription glasses of -14.00 diopters after her eye exam. The girl will soon have the chance to receive a pair of glasses perfectly adapted to her view, courtesy of Nikon Optical Laboratories. "You can leave the hand of your daughter; she can walk alone now," Elizabeth Duncan, optician and director of the dispensary, told the mother of this little girl.

Melia, a 51 year-old woman, received a pair of glasses of +13.00 to correct a high hypermetropia. Her poor results at the visual acuity (severe impairment) during pre-tests were not a good sign... "What a joy to see her smile when she discovered the distant and close letters. It was like a ray of sunshine." enthused Dr. Marie-France Duguay, optometrist.



"You can leave the hand of your daughter; she can walk alone now,"
Elizabeth Duncan, optician





AWARENESS OF VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

The main objective of the mission was to educate the population and medical authorities about visual problems, and make them aware that most visual impairments can be avoided or cured simply with a pair of glasses or ocular surgery.* "Glaucoma screening for each patient helped prevent blindness in several patients; these people didn't suspect that their vision was in jeopardy because of this endemic disease in Haiti," says Dr. Francine Lavallée, optometrist and director of visual care. More than 200 patients with eye diseases had the opportunity to be examined by volunteer ophthalmologists as well as receiving advice and eye medication. Patients with cataracts will be operated in the coming weeks by a Haitian ophthalmologist thanks to an IRIS Mundial special grant. The 150 patients with health problems that can affect their vision, such as hypertension and diabetes, were examined by a volunteer general practitioner who provided them with the appropriate medication.



The challenge of this mission in Haiti, the poorest country in the Americas, was successfully met; people will remember the visit of our team for a long time. The contacts established will help with the implementation of permanent ophthalmological services and will facilitate public access through a potential partnership with IRIS Mundial.

* Globally, 80% of all visual impairment can be prevented or cured.
Source: World Health Organization - 2015.

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS!

The success of IRIS Mundial missions is possible due to the contributions of many people, companies and organizations. We sincerely thank:



IRIS The Visual Group, all owners and teammates of the 150 IRIS stores across Canada that have supported IRIS Mundial in its projects since 2001, collecting and preparing eyewear, the **National Blindness Prevention Committee in Haiti (CNPC)** for its support and logistics, the **Ste-Therese Miragoane Hospital** where we accomplished our mission; Mr. Alfred Étienne from the **Foundation for Economic and Social Development** (Nippes, Haiti), **Alcon Foundation, International Health Collaboration, Maui Jim, Nikon Lenswear** and all those who contribute directly or indirectly to this cause that is very dear to our hearts.

Thank you to our volunteer directors and organizers: Dr. Francine Lavallée, Mrs. Elizabeth Duncan and Mrs. Johanne De Champlain, who made the mission possible! Thank you to our General Manager: Mrs. Catherine Rioux.

Congratulations and THANK YOU to all the volunteers for their generosity, determination and exceptional dedication!

Ophthalmologists:	Annie Moreau (Oklahoma), Marie-Carmelle Lucien-Guerrier (Haiti)
Special participation:	Luc Elidor (Haiti), Brigitte Hudicourt (Haiti)
General practitioner:	Jean Lamarche (Beauport)
Optometrists:	Francine Lavallée (Blainville), Éline Giasson (Rouyn-Noranda), Marie-Chantal Hudon (Laval), Christian Gagner (Blainville), Marie-France Duguay (Laval)
Opticians:	Elizabeth Duncan (Gatineau), Caroline Anderson (Blainville), Alex Haddad (Laval), Mihaela Mara Somogyi (Laval)
Eye care assistants:	Francine Arbic (Oka), Catherine Leeney (Calgary), Nelly Paul (Haiti), Maxi Marcelin (Haiti)
Nurses:	Johanne Champlain (Montreal), Monique Prud'homme (Longueuil), Judith Caron (Quebec), Nadia Bazil (Haiti), Miriame Cadet (Haiti)
Assistants and logisticians for the mission:	Éric Babin (Laval), Norbert Dufour (Laval), Anne Louise Giasson (Rouyn-Noranda), Virginie Mineault (Gatineau), Elvie Maxineau (Haiti), Guesly Vilmar (Haiti)
General Manager:	Catherine Rioux
Editors:	Francine Lavallée, Marie-France Duguay
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THANK YOU!