



Under the shelter of Novartis

Helping poor communities in Mexico

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At a glance

Issue

- Improve the living conditions of poor communities in Mexico

Objectives

- Offer healthcare, material and emotional support to poor communities in Mexico
- Engage associates through active participation – distributing meals, blankets, medicines and other items
- Foster a true partnership between Novartis and key opinion leaders (doctors and authorities) willing to volunteer their time

Activities (2005-2006)

- 8 000 blankets and meals distributed
- 20 000 medicines (Pharma, Sandoz and OTC) and 8 000 Gerber baby items donated to a local pharmacy
- 3 500 meters of clothing fabric and 700 toys given
- 700 physicians offering more than 5 000 free medical check-ups
- Support for children living in streets through the Casa Alianza Institution
- Medical Festival for Special Olympics athletes
- Healthcare educational program aimed at junior high students
- Weekly presence of Novartis through Corporate Citizenship activities organized by the Field Force
- Fund raising events to beneficiate NGOs' causes (Art Auction)

Results

- 14 000 people helped
- 'Under the shelter of Novartis' was awarded the international Banner of Peace (Bandera Pax) for its community outreach
- Increased associate pride in the company's community-building efforts
- Stronger links between Novartis and local doctors
- Working relationship between the company, the local community and authorities, as well as NGOs

Taking Mexican communities ‘Under the shelter of Novartis’

Launched in 2004, Bajo el Cobijo de Novartis (‘Under the shelter of Novartis’) is Novartis Mexico’s umbrella corporate citizenship program. Five projects currently form the program, ranging from outreach to poor communities during winter to local clean-up initiatives and youth support.

‘Under the shelter of Novartis’ unites the efforts of associates, physicians, NGOs, authorities, family and friends to support local causes that provide sustainable benefits for society. Since its start, the program has helped over 14 000 people and involved 700 physicians, offering more than 5 000 free medical check-ups. Novartis associates have donated more than 5 000 hours to support communities in need.

Through ‘Under the shelter of Novartis,’ Novartis Mexico has created a comprehensive corporate citizenship program, including material donations as well as medical and psychological support to poor communities. Since its start in 2004, over 14 000 people have benefited from the program and 700 physicians as well as associates have donated more than 5 000 hours.

In 2005, to mark the first anniversary of ‘Under the shelter of Novartis,’ a team of 40 Novartis associates and their families, as well as 16 medical volunteers, extended help to a remote community in extreme poverty. They provided free check-ups and care to over 600 patients, and donated 4 000 Gerber baby products, 4 000 medicines and 3 000 blankets to 1 500 families.

Medicines included anti-inflammatory products, antibiotics and cold medications. In total, in 2005, the five projects under the shelter of Novartis benefited over 6 000 people throughout Mexico, amounted to nearly 2 000 associate working hours, and involved some 500 volunteering physicians.

In 2006, a team of 70 volunteers offered support to 3 000 people living in San José Baqueachi, a Mexican community in Sierra Tarahumara. The team delivered donations of 6 000 medications, 1 000 meals, 1 200 blankets, 3 500 meters of clothing fabric and 700 toys. Overall 3 000 persons benefited from these donations.

‘Under the Shelter of Novartis’ provides ongoing support to the communities, continuing to provide periodic visits from associates and physicians as well as in-kind donations.

As a recognition of these community outreach efforts, ‘Under the shelter of Novartis’ was awarded the international Banner of Peace (Bandera Pax) in 2005, a symbol representing the unity of diversity and common hopes to attain a better world.

Business case

‘Under the shelter of Novartis’ has brought many benefits, internally and externally:

- Encouraging associate participation in the community and creating a sense of pride and commitment among employees. By donating time, associates have the opportunity to see the direct results of both the program and their own efforts.
- Enlisting the support of local doctors in the various projects and strengthening the partnership of Novartis with one of its major stakeholders.
- Involving local authorities and NGOs in community outreach and establishing Novartis Mexico as a trusted partner to improve the livelihoods of poor communities in Mexico.
- The Banner of Peace award increased the reputation of Novartis Mexico as a good corporate citizen who ‘walks the talk.’

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