

## **Essilor partners with the Government of Odisha to launch livelihood building programme, Eye Mitra**

***(29 May 2018) – Essilor is proud to announce its partnership with Odisha Skill Development Authority (OSDA), an organization of the Government of Odisha, India, for the local implementation of the Eye Mitra programme. Through this partnership over 300 young people will be trained to become primary vision care providers known as Eye Mitras who will provide affordable vision care for local communities.***

By launching its flagship inclusive business model, Eye Mitra (friend of the eyes), in Odisha, Essilor's inclusive business 2.5 New Vision Generation (2.5 NVG) and the Odisha Skill Development Authority (OSDA), will help young people to set up village-based businesses to detect vision problems and dispense affordable eyeglasses. The programme will improve the lives of rural communities by improving their sight and by creating work opportunities for under-employed or unemployed youth.

The partnership between 2.5 NVG and OSDA was signed by Mr. Milind Jadhav, Head of 2.5 NVG India and Mr. Rajesh Patil, IAS, Director & CEO OSDA, on Apr 29th in Bhubaneswar. "I feel honored to sign this agreement with Essilor's 2.5 New Vision Generation in the presence of our honorable Chief Minister of Odisha," said Mr. Rajesh Patil, IAS, Director & CEO of OSDA. "This partnership will not only give the citizens of Odisha access to good vision which will ultimately improve their life quality, it will also provide young men and women with training opportunities and the capacity to build a sustainable income."

Milind Jadhav, Head of 2.5 NVG India, commented: "We're delighted to partner with the Government of Odisha to further our common goal of social and economic development in developing countries. Uncorrected poor vision affects 1 in 3 people in India impacting their ability to learn, work and be safe. In line with Essilor Group's mission of improving lives by improving sight, 2.5 New Vision Generation is working to eradicate poor vision by raising awareness on the issue and creating access to vision care where it is needed most. We look forward to bringing the immediate benefits of eyeglasses to people in Odisha and at the same time creating work opportunities for young individuals."

The partnership was signed in the presence of Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha Mr. Naveen Patnaik, Mrs. Usha Devi (Minister - Planning & Convergence, Skill Development & Technical Education), Mr. Subroto Bagchi (Chairman - OSDA), Mr. Sanjay Kumar Singh (Commissioner-Cum-Secretary) and Mr. Saugata Banerjee (Vice President, South & South East Asia - 2.5 NVG).

Uncorrected poor vision -the world's most widespread unaddressed disability- affects 550 million Indians and \$37bn is wasted in lost productivity as a result of uncorrected poor vision in India. This impact is felt acutely in rural areas where awareness and access to vision care is often poor. By the end of 2018 Essilor's 2.5 NVG will have created 6,000 Eye Mitras across India to best serve the vision care needs of rural communities, making it the largest rural optical network in the world. To date the programme has provided more than 2.4 million pairs of affordable glasses to customers in rural India since its launch in 2013.

## **About OSDA**

*The OSDA is a body incorporated by the Department of Skill Development and Technical Education & Training, Government of Odisha, works in a focused and mission mode for enhancing the employability of unemployed youth through skill development training programmes for generation of employment/self-employment of underprivileged youth through various partnerships and industry tie-ups. It works on public private partnership (PPP) mode where Government and the Private sector partners are stakeholders and aims at linking maximum number of youth to jobs/self-employment in the organized sector, thereby, addressing the needs in rural areas and achieving all round development of the State.*

## **About 2.5 New Vision Generation and the Eye Mitra programme**

*In 2013, Essilor, leading ophthalmic optics company, established its inclusive business 2.5 New Vision Generation (2.5 NVG), to create awareness, develop infrastructure and bring affordable eye care low-income countries which count for 90% of the 2.5 bn people who suffer from uncorrected poor vision globally. Essilor's inclusive business programmes impact seven out of 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals. These include no poverty, quality educations, gender equality and decent work and economic growth.*

*In 2013, 2.5 NVG launched its flagship inclusive business programme Eye Mitra in India as part of its strategy of increasing awareness and access to vision care for underserved populations and at the same time improving their livelihood. Eye Mitra (Hindi for "friend of the eyes") addresses unmet needs for vision care by recruiting and training unemployed and underemployed young people to become primary vision care providers.*

## **About Essilor**

*Essilor International (Compagnie Générale d'Optique) ("Essilor") is the world's leading ophthalmic optics company. Essilor designs, manufactures and markets a wide range of lenses to improve and protect eyesight. Its mission is to improve lives by improving sight. To support this mission, Essilor allocates more than €200 million to research and innovation every year, in a commitment to continuously bring new, more effective products to market. Its flagship brands are Varilux<sup>®</sup>, Crizal<sup>®</sup>, Transitions<sup>®</sup>, Eyezen<sup>™</sup>, Xperio<sup>®</sup>, Foster Grant<sup>®</sup>, Bolon<sup>™</sup> and Costa<sup>®</sup>. It also develops and markets equipment, instruments and services for eyecare professionals.*

*Essilor reported consolidated revenue of around €7.5 billion in 2017 and employs approximately 67,000 people worldwide.*

*It has 34 plants, 481 prescription laboratories and edging facilities, as well as 4 research and development centers around the world. For more information, please visit [www.essilor.com](http://www.essilor.com).*

*The Essilor share trades on the Euronext Paris market and is included in the Euro Stoxx 50 and CAC 40 indices.*

*Codes and symbols: ISIN: FR0000121667; Reuters: ESSI.PA; Bloomberg: EI:FP.*

## **CONTACTS**

### **Media Relations**

Mailis Thiercelin  
Tel.: +33 (0)1 49 77 45 02  
[mailis.thiercelin@essilor.com](mailto:mailis.thiercelin@essilor.com)

### **Mission Communications**

Lauren Wyper  
Tel.: +65 97 29 04 23  
[lauren.wyper@essilor.com](mailto:lauren.wyper@essilor.com)