



## **Partner Sustainability Grant: 2011 Program Summary**

### ***Program Overview***

The Omprakash Partner Sustainability Grant is a new opportunity for Omprakash to provide strategic support to Partner organizations that propose entrepreneurial ways to generate revenue and lessen their dependence on charitable donations. All Omprakash Partners are eligible to apply for this grant. The Grant seeks realistic proposals for new initiatives that will increase the sustainability of the Partner—that is, initiatives that will maintain or increase the Partner’s ability to achieve its core mission beyond the immediate future. Grant recipients work closely with Omprakash administrators and volunteers for at least one year to ensure successful implementation of the proposed initiative.

This program represents an exciting new direction for Omprakash: it enables us to build upon our relationships with Partners and volunteers to target and incubate new social enterprises around the world. By posting stories and multimedia after they visit our Partners, our volunteers provide the critical mechanisms of transparency, accountability, and long-term mentorship that distinguish the Omprakash Partner Sustainability Grant from other initiatives that distribute one-off funding to organizations about which relatively little is known.

### ***2011 Overview***

We began 2011 with a budget of \$10,000 for our Partner Sustainability Grant program. We circulated a call for applications in June, and 32 of our Partners submitted applications before the September deadline. After spending one month reviewing applications and interviewing short-listed candidates, a committee of four Omprakash administrators awarded two grants for a total value of \$7,900. We wanted to fund many of the proposals that we received, but since most proposed initiatives required more than \$5,000 of startup funding, our budget constraints limited us to only two recipients.

The first grant was awarded to Voluntario Global, a Partner delivering nutrition and education-related services to disadvantaged children in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The grant will support the expansion of their student-run laundromat (shown at right with a visiting volunteer) by purchasing a new industrial-sized



washing machine. The new washing machine will expand the laundromat's capacity by 50%, and thus Voluntario Global will be able to offer part-time employment and semi-professional training to more local students. Voluntario Global's partnerships with five hotels in Buenos Aires will ensure a consistent demand for the laundromat's services. Meanwhile, Voluntario Global will use the extra revenue generated from this enterprise to help fund the continuation of social programs such as its children's community center (shown at right with a volunteer). In their own words:



*[Because of the grant,] we will be able to grow, to give more opportunities to the young people we work with so they can study, have a first job and to change their life for the better.*

The second grant was awarded to Intag, an Omprakash Partner working on education and community development in rural Ecuador. This grant will support the growth of an eco-tourism initiative by enabling the construction and improvement of two modest tourist hostels in the remote Intag Valley. The eco-tourism project is designed to generate revenue while also helping foreign tourists and researchers learn about the unique cultures and ecosystems of the Intag Valley. The initiative will provide guiding jobs for local residents of the Intag Valley, and the additional revenue from the initiative will fuel the continued development of the educational enrichment programs that Intag offers to nearby schools and communities (shown at right). In their own words:



*We are fortunate to be partners with Omprakash, and together, with the committed volunteers that they bring us, we are establishing healthy and sustainable alternatives to complement sources of income for the Intag area.*

### **Other Noteworthy Proposals**

While we are extremely pleased to be able to support the entrepreneurial visions of Intag and Voluntario Global, we regret not having more funding with which we could support the many other fantastic proposals that we received. We received especially noteworthy proposals from the following Partners:

- Life and Hope, Cambodia: Expand its sale of handicrafts by purchasing vending space in the local marketplace

- Kibera Girls' Soccer Academy, Kenya: Initiate a taxi service that employs local drivers and generates revenue by offering reliable taxis to tourists
- SOVHEN (Supporting Orphans and the Vulnerable for Health, Education, and Nutrition), Uganda: Produce and sell environmentally-friendly sanitary pads that generate revenue for the organization while also offering girls and women an affordable way to avoid missing school or work due to menstruation
- Rural Women's Development Trust, India: To help its female constituents in Tamilnadu start their own small milk-selling businesses, RWDT aims to buy water buffaloes that it can provide to women as a low-interest loan

Looking forward, we hope to be able to secure funding that will enable us to support these innovative social ventures and to encourage the development of similar ventures across our network.

### ***2012 Goals***

We are very excited about the many ways in which we can expand the scope and impact of our Partner Sustainability Grant. In 2012, we hope to raise \$25,000 for this program, which we can then use to support another three or four initiatives. Meanwhile, we will also provide systematic mentoring and evaluations of the initiatives at Voluntario Global and Intag, because the success and profitability of these grant recipients will be critical to our expansion of the program.

In addition to raising funds that we can redistribute through our Partner Sustainability Grant, we are also very willing to work with potential donors who want to personally solicit and review proposals from within our network of Partners.