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AFRICA: HOW ESSILOR ADAPTS TO THE DIVERSITY OF VISION CARE NEEDS

With 1.2 billion inhabitants across 54 countries, Africa is a vast, diverse and complex continent. Discover one of the business models that Essilor has developed to improve access to vision care for all and develop the optical market.

The challenges of providing vision care in Africa can be summed up in four As: awareness, access, acceptance and affordability. In sub-Saharan Africa, Essilor is leveraging its different Group assets and expertise to remove barriers to access in countries where there is a widespread lack of eye care professionals. The Group's approach is to test, learn and scale-up unique solutions to better meet the needs of all, from low-income consumers to the growing middle classes.

Africa has a long tradition of entrepreneurial activity. Capitalizing on this, Essilor has created "My Vision Shop" – a turnkey solution for entrepreneurs who want to open their own optician's shop. The principle is simple: Essilor provides each entrepreneur with a start-up kit containing all the tools needed to open a store – frames, lenses, instruments, store software, training, marketing aids etc.

Support teams work with project owners to help them establish a stable and sustainable business over the long-term. Advice is adapted to the location of each store, whether in a city or hospital, and takes into account the level of investment that the entrepreneur is looking for. The umbrella brand, which is

shared by all stores in each market, helps develop the “My Vision Shop” brand image and reputation, meaning that success at one store contributes to the success of all. This model helps speed up the development of vision care infrastructure in underdeveloped markets as well as creating career opportunities for young entrepreneurs. To date, Essilor’s retail team has helped create “My Vision Shop” in countries like Mozambique.

Essilor has many other business models in operation – from franchise systems, distribution in pharmacies or petrol stations to vision ambassadors selling affordable reading and sunglasses to low income consumers or free vision care programs for those who do not have the means to buy a pair of glasses. Each approach adapts to the reality on the ground so that, when it comes to vision care, no one is left behind.