

Charis Vision and Health Mission (CharisHealth) received a grant from the Optometry Giving Sight (OGS) to strengthen optometry training at Arthur Jarvis University in Cross River State by providing ophthalmic equipment and enhancing capacity building. This need is underscored by an acute shortage of qualified optometrists in several Nigerian states, including Cross River and its neighbouring Benue, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, and Ebonyi, which collectively have a population of approximately 25 million.

To address this gap, the partnership among OGS, CharisHealth, and Arthur Jarvis University (AJU) aims to increase the number of qualified optometrists at AJU, thereby addressing regional eye health challenges. This intervention is critical in communities where cultural beliefs or stigma related to eye conditions deter individuals from seeking care. The project is expected to advance eye health research and enhance the public's understanding of optometry's role in maintaining ocular health.

Reflecting this focus, the estimated number of individuals who will benefit from the project is 8,000.

Project title: The Optometry Education Project

Start date: 1/10/2025

End date: 30/09/2026

Target population for project: 25million

Milestones

1. Equipped and functioning optometric clinic at Arthur Jarvis University.
2. Improved educational proficiency in current optometry training at Arthur Jarvis University by October 2028.
3. Increased quality of eye care services at the Arthur Jarvis University optometry clinic and surrounding communities.
4. Increased proportion of referred persons attending the optometry clinic at Arthur Jarvis University.

Sustainable indicators

The Optometry education program is designed to be sustainable through several key strategies:

1. Implementing ongoing public awareness campaigns to inform and engage the community.
2. Upgrading the Arthur Jarvis University Hospital facility to accommodate the optometric clinic to provide students with more opportunities for hands-on practical experience, which is expected to increase student enrollment.
3. AJU is securing local government support for infrastructure, such as improved access roads, to make transportation to the clinic easier.
4. Partnering with local government to mobilise community members to benefit from outreach programs and appropriate referrals, which in turn fosters local ownership and collaborative partnerships.

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