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GBCHealth, a coalition of more than 230 private sector companies working to improve global health, has awarded the Novartis' Arogya Parivar program the Business Action on Health Award for Application of Core Competence. Arogya Parivar is Novartis' sustainable business model that makes affordable, high-quality medicines accessible to underserved millions in India. The program also expands access to health education and consultations in remote villages.

"We are proud to be recognized by GBCHealth for our Arogya Parivar program," said Mr Joe Jimenez, Novartis chief executive officer. "Arogya Parivar is an important part of the work Novartis is doing around the world to develop sustainable solutions that address the unmet medical needs of people in developing nations. Through our social ventures programs, we're making a difference by encouraging better health and at the same time driving local economic growth. We expect Arogya Parivar to have an enduring impact in India and look forward to extending the model to other developing economies."

Arogya Parivar, meaning "Healthy Family" in Hindi, is a for-profit social business developed by Novartis that adapts a market-based approach to improve healthcare access for India's rural poor. Novartis trains health educators, who teach communities about health and disease prevention, and sales supervisors, who increase local medicine access across several therapeutic areas by informing local pharmacists about products. Since launching Arogya Parivar in 2007, Novartis has trained more than 500 health educators and supervisors and improved access to healthcare for 42 million patients across 33,000 villages in India. As a result of the positive impact of Arogya Parivar, Novartis is working to further expand the social business model in 2014.

Arogya Parivar is one example of a Novartis "social venture" approach. Social ventures build local, sustainable solutions to address healthcare challenges in emerging markets. These programs go beyond medicine, donations, and price reductions, by tackling larger societal issues that impact access to healthcare: education, infrastructure and distribution.