

Cambodia Fact Sheet

SEVA'S WORK AT A GLANCE: In country since 1998 | Partners: 15



Country Overview

- » Bordered by Thailand to the northwest, Laos to the northeast, Vietnam to the east and the Gulf of Thailand to the southwest
- » Cambodia spans 69,898 square miles
- » Population: 16.7 million people
- » 2023-2024 Human Development Index Ranking: 148 of 193 countries¹

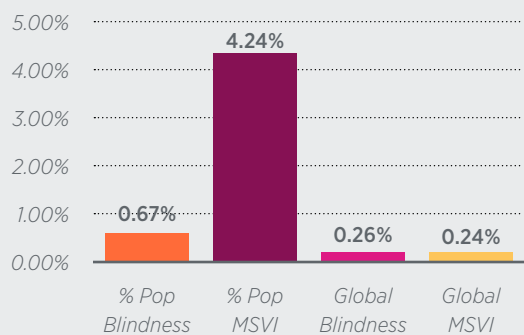
Scope of Eye Care Needs²

- » 0.67% of Cambodia's population is blind as compared to 0.19% in the United States
- » 4.24% of the population has moderate to severe vision impairment or MSVI as compared to 2.02% in the United States
- » 0.26% of global blindness
- » 0.24% of global MSVI

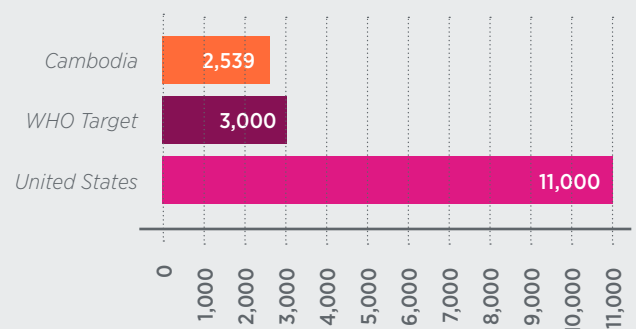
Nationwide Eye Care Response³

- » Cambodia's Cataract Surgical Rate (CSR) was 2,539 surgeries per million in 2019, as compared to the US CSR of 11,000
- » 6 Ophthalmologists per million people in 2023 (100 total)
- » 5 Optometrists per million people in 2023 (155 total)
- » 11 Allied Ophthalmic Personnel per million in 2023 (351 total)

EYE CARE NEEDS



CATARACT SURGICAL RATE PER MILLION PEOPLE



¹ UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). 2024. Human Development Report 2023-24: Breaking the gridlock: Reimagining cooperation in a polarized world. New York.

² Unless otherwise noted, all country sight statistics from IAPB Vision Atlas: <https://www.iapb.org/learn/vision-atlas/>

³ NPEH Annual Report 2023.pdf

Context

Cambodia is a country rich in culture, inspired from nearly two millennia of a unique Khmer blend of Buddhism, Hinduism and animistic religious belief systems. After years of painful genocide and civil war, now just under 40 years later, the Cambodian population continues to slowly rebuild and reclaim their culture as well as an infrastructure of government and health care systems. Much of the population lives in rural communities practicing traditional and other forms of agriculture, making access to primary health care facilities extremely challenging.¹

The large majority of those experiencing blindness in Cambodia are either preventable or curable, but sadly, the vast majority of Cambodians do not have access to quality, affordable eye care. Seva works in six provinces, with in country partners, to bring needed eye care services to Cambodia's most vulnerable populations, including rural communities, women, and children.

Countrywide services continue to be built out in attempts at alleviating this concern. Existing and new infrastructure of hospitals and health centers as well as the professionals who staff these locations and other remote programs throughout the country are pivotal in providing Cambodians with the care they need and deserve.

In a country with a total of 25 provinces, there are **17 provincial referral hospitals** with eye units and 559 Health centers in Cambodia with eye units (45% of the country's total number of health centers).² It's clear the country is striving to tackle the widespread issue of preventable blindness. However, the country still needs a significant increase in trained and available eye care professionals.

Seva's Approach in Cambodia

Seva works in six provinces throughout Cambodia with 15 partners including 4 new vision centers, the Ministry of Health, government operated eye clinics, health facilities, and not-for-profit clinics. The provinces

include Banteay Meanchey, Siem Reap, Battambang and Pursat all in the northwest. Kampot and Takeo are in the southwest bordering Vietnam. Seva's target is to screen 26% of the total population by continuing to work with existing partners in these provinces.

Seva's approach to addressing eye health needs in Cambodia prioritize three key strategies: **Access** to universal eye care, building **Capacity** of personnel and infrastructure as well as **Evidence**-based interventions and advocacy.

Primary eye care services offer adult outpatient services through key partner hospitals and vision centers in Seva's catchment area. Community outreach activities include screenings and door-to-door visits in remote communities as well as distribution of educational materials and radio PSAs.

Modern **Technology** for patient care is vital in supporting up-to-date practices implemented locally. By purchasing clinical equipment for partner hospitals, Seva and our partners ensure an increase in availability of quality services for the Cambodian population.

By focusing on **Hospital Management Systems** such as training, tracking, and evaluations, hospitals and local communities alike are more equipped to build out their capacity and more effectively serve their populations. Seva with our partners, provide trainings for local doctors in ophthalmology residencies, Allied Ophthalmic Personnel as well as teachers for school screenings. The quality of cataract surgeries, evaluation of personnel and the effectiveness of service delivery are all tracked. Attendance at professional conferences and meetings allows our partners to share program findings with a broader community of specialists.

Seva continues to work with one of our partners to deliver pediatric outpatient services and conduct eye camps (exams, eye health education, medical treatment, glasses, surgeries, transport) with technology and trained personnel (Pediatric Allied Ophthalmic Personnel; Health Center Staff; Teachers for school screening). The quality of cataract surgeries, specifically for pediatrics, is always

¹ http://www.wpro.who.int/health_services/service_delivery_profile_cambodia.pdf

² Cambodia's National Strategic Plan for Blindness Prevention and Control 2021-2030: <https://sevaoun.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/Public/EWewmpqyzDtNnPRQ7JE1VOYBIJjZYb49JV9Pi5OVDXxxPA?e=WNe68b>

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tracked and the findings disseminated with other professionals who are invested in improving universal eye care.

Seva assisted the Ministry of Health and National Program for Eye Health (NPEH) to develop the Cambodia's "National Strategic Plan for Blindness Prevention and Control 2021-2030". Seva was invited by NPEH to launch the National Strategy's Provincial Roadmap in the 5 Seva working provinces. Seva Cambodia is an active member of the consultative team established by the government and has been supporting them in implementing the national eye health strategies.

EYE CARE PERSONNEL

6



Ophthalmologists per million people

5



Optometrists per million people

11



Ophthalmic personnel per million people

 = 1 million people

Resources

[Seva in Cambodia](#)

SPOTLIGHT ON REACHING CHILDREN

Sampors is a ten-year-old girl living in Kralanh District, Cambodia. Born to a small family, they earn a living by raising poultry and growing crops around their house. Two years prior, Sampors complained that she could not see letters on the chalk board and many other things around her well due to her blurry vision. Her father went to the school to request she sit in the front row, but she still could not see.

"My classmates bullied me using a lot of bad words, and I avoided playing with them at school. I didn't enjoy my studies at that time." - Sampors.

Fortunately, Sampors's school teacher was trained in eye health education by the AHC outreach program. The teacher confirmed she had refractive error and referred her to AHC. Her parents brought her to visit AHC ophthalmic staff. The AHC refraction nurse checked and reconfirmed her poor vision and prescribed her a pair of good quality glasses to improve her eyesight.

"My monthly academic rank is much improved from the 31st to the 14th after receiving glasses. What I wished to see the most after my eyesight improved is my parents. Now my wish has come true. I can read and see many things that I want. I also can help my parents with housework. I want to become a police officer to safeguard my society when I grow up. I am so hopeful and can see my bright future with my new eyesight." - Sampors.

Sampors continues to have follow up appointments. Her glasses help improve her academic activities such as learning, reading, writing and interacting with others.

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IMPACT (FY 2023-2024)*

125,594

People receiving services

9,101

Cataract surgeries performed

22,658

Children screened

3,192

Children receiving surgery

3,095

Children receiving glasses

1

New VC funded

169,421

People who now have access to care

2,263

People receiving services at VCs

2

Seva led trainings for 11 hospitals and 33 participants

93

Doctors trained

33

AOPS trained

386

Community Health Promoters trained

88

Administrators trained

* Numbers based on reports received.

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