

# IMPACT REPORT

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024





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### *Phally Angel, Cambodia*

Phally's sight has improved 80-90% after receiving a new pair of eyeglasses. The young boy loves to play, draw and color (especially fruits), and is learning English. Mom is also over the moon to see her son thrive.

### *Quiche, Guatemala* (Cover Story)

After cataract surgery, Biviana Lopez Alvarado, standing with her husband in front of their adobe home, regained her independence. She's back at work, selling goods at the local market that help support her family.

# To Our Friends in Service

## A LETTER FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Last year, 78% of global spending on health care occurred in high-income countries, despite these countries containing only 16% of the world's population. Promising new diagnostics, treatments, and medications continue to make their way to market, but the data signals another message: most of these innovations will never reach the communities that stand to benefit the most.

For 46 years, this paradox has motivated the Seva Foundation to be part of the solution. We build high-impact public health interventions that create equitable access to eye care for underserved communities. Our evidence-informed solutions, developed collaboratively with local experts and scaled globally through a network of partners, are backed by best-in-class methodologies and scientific rigor. As I like to describe it, Seva is in the health systems industry, strengthening and scaling sustainable public health infrastructure in underserved communities. The result is restoring sight, with 64 million people receiving eye care services since 1978, including 7 million people in the last year alone.

For decades, we've stated that restoring sight is one of the most cost-effective interventions to reducing poverty - we now have the data to back this statement up. Groundbreaking research from Seva, published this past year in the *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, proves every \$1 invested in eye health returns \$36 in benefits across society, be it better learning, higher income, or increased productivity. Even more, investment in eye health outpaces typical return of other high-profile domains, including nutrition (\$13), non-communicable diseases (\$9), and general

development interventions (\$6). This research makes the unequivocal case for action on eye health, urging governments and leaders to prioritize eye care on the global agenda while also affirming the value organizations like Seva provide in the international development arena.

What we're doing works. From 2023 to 2024, we've seen a 21% increase in women receiving eye care services, a 13% increase in the number of children receiving eyeglasses, and a 20x increase in eye services provided across our network of partners. This track record of success rests on more than four decades of science, the most compassionate and fearless team of staff and partners, and an unwavering commitment to program fidelity - ensuring your good is directed where it will do the most.

As you flip through this report, you'll learn more about our new Vision Centers, diagnostic tools we're field testing, and our bold plan, "Guatemala Brillando," which will create access to eye care for the entire country by 2032. Most importantly, you'll meet a few people whose lives were transformed this year through your generosity and compassion.

On behalf of the board of trustees, our teams, and partners worldwide - thank you for your commitment to creating equitable health systems and making the world a brighter place for all.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, sweeping arch over a smaller, more intricate mark.

**Kate Moynihan,**  
CEO/Executive Director

# WHY SIGHT?

Over 1.1 billion people worldwide live with vision impairment that could have been prevented or treated. Without significant investments, this figure will rise to 1.7 billion people by the year 2050. A life without clear vision is a life deprived of independence, freedom, and opportunity. For a person in the developing world, this can be catastrophic and a threat to dignity.

Men and women who lose their sight are often unable to care for themselves or provide for their families. Children with impaired vision are forced to leave school or are often ostracized by their peers. Members of the family must frequently shift priorities in their own lives to take care of the person who has lost their sight. When one person loses their sight, an entire community suffers.

# OUR VISION

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*A world free of avoidable blindness.*

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According to the World Bank, restoring sight is one of the most cost-effective interventions to reduce poverty. It has an immediate and profound impact on the patient who can now see, study, earn a living, and support their family. Additionally, restoring one person's sight gives two people their lives back: the person with the vision impairment and their caregiver. This creates a positive ripple effect on the entire family and community.

Since 1978, Seva has transformed lives by restoring sight in communities with little or no access to eye care. Today, Seva is a highly effective global nonprofit organization, working with 150+ partner hospitals around the world to increase the capacity of local hospitals and develop sustainable eye care programs with long-term impact.

Thanks to your support, Seva has provided vital eye care services to 64 million people in the world, including 7,314,781 people in the last year alone. Seva's vision is a world in which no one lives with avoidable blindness.

With your help, we can make that vision a reality in our lifetime.

## *Haji Athuman, Tanzania*

As Haji lost his sight, he also lost his ability to work as a driver and mechanic. He was unable to see the roads and driving became impossible. Through your support, Haji was diagnosed and treated for cataracts, and is back to work and supporting his family. "Now that I can see clearly, I have overcome all the obstacles I was having before!"



# WHERE YOUR GOOD DID THE MOST

*Because of you,*

**7,314,781**

*people received eye care services in 2023-2024.*

**3,793,037**

*were women or girls.*

**885,782**

*people received cataract surgeries.*



## VISION CENTERS

**41**

Vision Centers established in 2023-2024

**6,004,658**

People gained access to essential eye care services through Vision Centers

**244,557**

People received services at Vision Centers



## EYE CARE FOR CHILDREN

**555,075**

Children screened

**58,635**

Children received glasses

**9,244**

Children received surgery



## TRAINING AND JOB CREATION

**306**

Doctors trained

**783**

Ophthalmic support staff trained

**542**

Administrators trained

**3,915**

Community Health Promoters trained

**22**

Seva-led trainings completed

**158**

Seva-led trainings participant hospitals

**635**

Seva-led trainings participants



## TECHNOLOGY

Our current areas of focus in the pipeline include: portable, low-cost **diagnostic devices**; access to **affordable medications**; new **telemedicine software**, enabling us to reach isolated communities; and advanced **digitization of medical records**.

*“I am very happy to get my sight back, I can see everything and do everything by myself”*

- Ranjita

*Ranjita Rai, India*

After receiving a cataract surgery and a pair of eyeglasses, Ranjita is most excited about being able to read to her three kids, helping them with their studies and preparing meals for the family.







# OUR WORK

*Building Sustainable Eye Care  
Systems Worldwide.*

*Seva builds sustainable eye care systems and empowers local communities to provide eye care for themselves. The three strategic priorities that make our vision a reality are:*



## *Creating* **ACCESS**

90% of people with uncorrected vision impairment live in low- and middle-income countries, where geographic isolation, limited health facilities, and economic stress prevent communities from accessing health services. Seva works hand-in-hand with local partners to break down these barriers and create consistent access to world-class eye care.

We provide partners with a suite of technology, medical supplies, and other resources necessary to carry out comprehensive vision care at low or no cost to patients. This includes sight-restoring cataract surgeries, medication, and eyeglasses, among other vision services. For patients whose situations prevent them from accessing care, we also secure basic transportation, food, and accommodation needs, ensuring no person is left behind. Localized outreach and awareness campaigns are simultaneously conducted in communities to create a consistent pipeline to care.

Seva partnered with CL Gupta Eye Institute in India to create access to eye care for people living in the urban slums of Uttar Pradesh. Through this partnership, 65,000 people had their eyes screened, 1,943 eyeglasses were provided, and 550 cataract surgeries were conducted. People who live with leprosy in India have historically faced intense discrimination, often forced to live in separate colonies and unable to access health care. In partnership with Mahanadi Netra Chikitsalaya in Odisha, we screened and provided eye care services to 2,851 leprosy-affected individuals and families.

Through our partnership with the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, elders in White Mesa, Utah, a remote area of the Ute reservation, can access eye care services without the need for excessive travel. Patients in need of more extensive care are provided transportation to the nearest regional facility. Six new Vision Centers were also established across Latin America, creating access to eye care for 2.3 million people.

We renewed a five-year memorandum of understanding with the Government of Nepal to operate our eye care programs until July 2029. Currently, Seva Nepal is one of the largest and longest-serving eye care organizations in the country, operating in six out of seven provinces and creating access to eye care for millions.





## *Building* **CAPACITY**

Current eye care systems in developing countries are not equipped, robust, and resilient enough to meet the demand of the countries' eye care needs. Seva alleviates the strain on eye care systems by building and strengthening the capacity of hospitals and clinics. We achieve this via a network of 150+ hospitals in low- and middle-income countries working together.

This network connects “mentor” and “mentee” institutions together, whereby one provides training, research, mentoring, and consultancy to the other. This is the most effective and efficient way to provide high-quality eye care at scale and expand the availability of such services. Seva rigorously trains ophthalmic support staff in management, clinical skills, community outreach, and a myriad of other roles required for a strong program. To ensure patient safety, we also implement comprehensive training and quality protocols. Vision Centers also create permanent and sustainable access to eye care in rural and often underserved communities.

Last year, we convened representatives from 36 partner hospitals across India to facilitate knowledge exchange and strengthen collaboration in the delivery of eye care services. Participants used key learnings to strengthen strategic eye care plans within their institutions. We also launched a management and leadership development program for 40 eye care managers from Guatemala, Peru, Bolivia, Dominican Republic and Paraguay. Through this program, managers improved their skills and competencies to lead teams to deliver high-quality, people-centered eye care at scale. Last year, Seva Cambodia partnered with Zamindar Eye Centre to host “Observe, Understand, and Change,” an intensive training for eye care personnel to learn about patient safety and quality standards. We also organized site visits for hospital staff to visit “mentor” hospitals and learn how to successfully improve clinical outcomes and surgical capacity within their own institutions.

### *David Mukisa, Uganda*

Seven-year-old David had vision problems since he was just two, but his mom could not travel to the nearby hospital or afford care. Thanks to Seva supporters, he was transported to our partner hospital, where he was provided bilateral cataract surgery. With his sight restored, David's succeeding in and out of the classroom—his future is bright!



## *Collecting and Learning from* **EVIDENCE**

Seva meticulously and systematically tracks and analyzes data on more than 120 metrics from the 200+ hospitals and VCs we support around the world. This data informs our strategic approach—everything from the number of patients screened, their age and gender, to the conditions they present, number of post-op visits required, miles they traveled, and country-wide patterns happening in eye care (among other variables). This level of detail and scope enables us to better identify, anticipate, plan and deliver on the specific vision needs of communities.

Last fall, Seva published a groundbreaking study in the *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* that proves every \$1 invested in eye health returns \$36 in benefits across society, be it improved learning, higher income, or increased productivity. At a \$36 to \$1 return, investment in eye health outpaces typical returns of other high profile health domains, including nutrition (\$13), non-communicable diseases (\$9), and general development interventions (\$6). This report demonstrates eye care as a ‘best buy’ in global health and development, making the unequivocal case to government leaders and partners for continued investment in eye health while reaffirming the value organizations like Seva provide in the international development sector.

We also analyze country-specific eye health patterns to inform our approach. This past year in Paraguay, we conducted a Rapid Assessment of Avoidable Blindness (RAAB) in coordination with the Ministry of Health to collect data on the prevalence of blindness and visual impairment. These findings enable us to better plan, develop and implement eye care solutions tailored to the specific needs of a community.

### *Bhante Doli, Nepal*

Bhante Doli has been a tailor his whole life, learning the trade from his father. When he developed cataracts, he could no longer work and support his family. He received a 15-minute cataract surgery that restored his sight and, today, is back to work and teaching the craft to his son.











*Victoria Isabel,  
Guatemala*

Victoria Isabel (left) could not see for an entire year, affecting her ability to work and earn a living weaving traditional textiles. She would often trip and fall while walking outside, and even faced bullying from her peers. Victoria visited our partner hospital, where she was diagnosed and treated for cataracts.

The first time Victoria could see was during the surgery. “I noticed the light and was feeling so happy,” she shared. Victoria can once again work, walk on her own without fear of falling or harassment, and do her favorite activity—reading.





# SEVA'S DRIVERS OF SUCCESS

*Creating a world where everyone can see requires meticulous measurement of the impact of our work. The “Four Drivers” enable us to track the efficacy of our solutions and stay ahead of the curve.*

## *Mithu Baag, India*

What did Mithu Baag get to do after regaining her sight? See the smiling face of her youngest grandchild—for the first time ever!

For two years, Mithu Baag, a loving grandmother to five children, lived with blindness. For someone who prides themselves on being independent, Mithu was devastated. She could no longer walk around on her own and completely relied on her daughter for care. “My mother was not able to see at all, she completely depended on me, she could not even see the food on her plate,” her daughter shared.

After receiving a 15-minute cataract surgery, Mithu's entire future transformed. She's ecstatic that she can see clearly and, once again, be independent. Mostly, she's happy she can see and play with her grandchildren for many years to come.

# VISION CENTERS

Most people in rural areas do not have access to quality eye care, as hospitals and clinics are located at great distances. A Vision Center (VC) is a permanent, local establishment equipped to meet 80% of all eye care needs in a single visit, and refer patients who require more advanced care to a nearby hospital. Vision Centers are self-sustaining, providing services for free, at a subsidized rate, or at full price depending on what patients can afford. On average, a VC will treat 3,600 patients a year, provide 360 pairs of eyeglasses, and refer 300 patients for additional services (including 125 for surgery, the most common surgery being cataract, the leading cause of blindness globally). Depending on the region, a single VC creates immediate access to long-term eye care for 50,000 to 500,000 people.

In Luque, Paraguay, we opened our first physical Vision Center, expected to bring services to 416,000 people. In the hilly and isolated region of Uttarakhand, India, patients would travel more than a day to reach the nearest hospital for primary eye conditions. We introduced mobile VCs to the region, which have provided eye care services to 14,847 patients, distributed 3,074 eyeglasses, and conducted 1,433 surgeries.

This year, you helped Seva establish a total of 41 new VCs around the world, including in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, India, Nepal, Paraguay, and Peru, creating access to eye care for more than 6 million people.

## *West Bengal, India*

All smiles awaiting an eye check at the Naxalbari Vision Center in West Bengal





### *Paraguay*

This mobile eye unit brings eye care to the doorsteps of remote communities in Paraguay, ensuring everyone can access the eye care they need.

## TECHNOLOGY

Seva supports and invests in revolutionary eye care technology that improves diagnostics, treatment, or delivery. Pristine 5.0, our ground-breaking wide-field retinal camera developed in collaboration with Remidio Innovative Solutions, is currently completing a second round of field testing in India, Guatemala, Mozambique and Ukraine. Most medical devices currently on the market do not easily detect conditions originating at the back of the eye. This leaves a tremendous gap for many non-symptomatic blindness-causing diseases, such as CMV retinitis and diabetic retinopathy, to go undiagnosed. Pristine 5.0 is a portable, durable, and cost-effective camera for eye care clinics to diagnose and treat these conditions. The device is expected to ship in late 2024 to more regions to expand access to retinal imaging.

Seva also invests in tried-and-tested technology, such as biosimilars, electronic health records, software applications and artificial intelligence that increase effectiveness and efficiency of vision screenings, outreach initiatives, hospital flow, disease detection, and treatment of eye conditions.

Every other year, we put out a Call for Ideas to identify innovative technology-based solutions that improve eye care delivery. Through this, our partner,

Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital, developed a mobile app that captures clinical data during door-to-door screenings and in Vision Centers. The app then integrates with a hospital's web platform for immediate patient referral. Currently, the app is used by more than 1,000 community health workers who have screened nearly 3.5 million patients across various countries. This year, the technology was scaled to Cambodia, with plans to roll out in other countries.

Another innovation, the Vision Center Management Software, monitors patient records, clinical audits and teleophthalmology. It is currently installed in 92 clinics, capturing data from 4 million patients and providing broader insight on eye care trends.

We supported Caritas Takeo Eye Hospital in Cambodia to improve eye consultations through telehealth options and digital slit lamps. Through this, an additional 30,000 people will receive eye care services. Another project with Bharatpur Eye Hospital in Nepal supports pediatric eye screenings to occur through a SPOT device.

# EYE CARE FOR CHILDREN

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Globally, 90 million children and adolescents live with some form of vision impairment. Because 80% of what a child learns is processed visually, without sight a child may miss educational opportunities, experience social isolation, face greater harm or injury, and experience barriers to employment later on in life.

Seva's pediatric programs provide comprehensive eye care and treatment for children, from screening and early identification of eye care needs to referral, provision of care, and long-term follow-up. Our programs are strategically embedded in schools and local community networks to meet children where they are.

Across Latin America, we conducted eye screenings for children at schools and child-focused assistance centers, while also providing training to teachers and staff on basic detection of vision problems in children. Through this, 52,206 children had their eyes screened, 11,791 received eyeglasses, and 616 received surgery. In Africa, children are identified and screened for vision problems through community-based outreach.

Retinopathy of Prematurity (RoP) is an eye disease that affects many premature babies and is a common cause of vision loss among children. Seva has initiated RoP programs in Paraguay, Mexico, India, and Ukraine. In India, our RoP initiative has screened 2,777 babies and provided 128 laser surgeries.

In Norton Sound, Alaska, a remote island community only accessible by air travel, 2,900 Native children were provided eye care through our partnership with Tundra Health Initiative.

Our sibling screening program in India targets children with heritable eye conditions to receive eye care together during a single visit. Through this initiative, 10,383 siblings have had their eyes screened. Ongoing eye screening camps and school-screening programs gave 86,009 children comprehensive eye care services; 2,709 were provided with eyeglasses, and 275 were treated with surgery.

In Nepal, we conducted eye screenings for children across 968 schools last year through our partners.



# TRAINING AND JOB CREATION

The demand for eye care services outpaces the supply of eye care professionals. 68% of countries are home to only 5% of the world's ophthalmologists, mostly concentrated in major cities. This leaves millions behind without critical access to timely vision services.

We invest in and strengthen the global eye care workforce by hiring and training ophthalmologists, ophthalmic support staff, and community outreach workers, with an emphasis on underrepresented women. Support staff are equipped to address basic eye health conditions and refer patients who require more complex care, like surgery, to ophthalmologists. This method is cost-effective, increases the number of skilled personnel available, strengthens the local economy through job creation, and enables the longevity of eye care services, even long after Seva's direct involvement has ended.

Eyexcel, our "training the trainers" program, imparts practical and actionable skills to partners to provide quality eye care. This year, we launched our first Eyexcel Advanced Workshop, focused

on improving the scale and quality of training delivered to eye care personnel in resource-limited settings, ultimately increasing the number of patients served. Seva supported and led various other trainings to increase the efficiency and quality of eye care services provided by hospital teams, including data management practices, enhancing intervention rates for eyeglasses, improving cataract surgery outcomes, and counselor training.

We also established two Allied Ophthalmic Personnel training centers in India, aimed at creating a skilled and robust paramedical workforce. Our e-Learning platform, InSight, has over 70 self-paced courses that provide competency-based training lessons and exercises for all eye care personnel on various topics. This year, 321 users from across 89 hospitals in 15 countries used the platform to learn and share best practices in quality improvement and delivery of eye care services.

This year, you made it possible to provide training to 306 doctors, 783 ophthalmic support staff, 542 administrators, and 3,915 community health promoters.



## *Alma, Paraguay*

Mom is ecstatic after her young daughter, Alma, received a Seva-supported cataract surgery that restored her sight.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

In highly remote regions, the demand for eye care services often outweighs the number of eye care personnel available. We bridge this gap by supporting ongoing mentorship and training initiatives to build the capacity of local eye care institutions and personnel.

In collaboration with Kilimanjaro Centre for Community Ophthalmology (KCCO), we partnered with the Mbeya Zonal Referral Hospital in Tanzania to strengthen adult ophthalmic services. Through this, clinical staff at Mbeya Zonal Referral Hospital received training on patient outreach, how to conduct eye screenings, and improve surgical outcomes. With Seva's support, the head of the eye department also joined a one-year pediatric ophthalmology training program. Since then, Mbeya Hospital has established a pediatric eye care program that now benefits over six million people in the region. Before this, patients would travel up to 14 hours to access specialized pediatric eye care.

Mbeya Hospital has set a goal to establish a School of Optometry in the future. If successful, it will become Tanzania's only optometry school and fill a critical gap in the country's eye care infrastructure.

## PARTNER HIGHLIGHT:

Native and indigenous communities disproportionately suffer from higher rates of preventable and treatable eye conditions due to a lack of access to affordable, quality eye care. Some barriers to care include poverty, geographic isolation, and the lack of linguistically and culturally appropriate eye care providers. Through our Native American Vision program, Seva partners directly with Native communities to co-create eye care solutions.

Through a new partnership with Minneapolis Public Schools and the Minnesota Vision Health Taskforce, Seva is supporting access to eye care for members of all 11 federally recognized tribes in Minnesota. Through eye screening events, new eye clinics, distribution of eyeglasses, and a community action coalition, hundreds of Natives in these communities have received eye care. We are utilizing patient data from these efforts to examine the benefits of quality eye care for Native students in Minnesota to inform and strengthen our future plans.

### *Kenya, New Mexico*

Since receiving a pair of eyeglasses, Kenya has become the top of her class. She loves learning, playing with her friends, and being a big sister to her younger sister.







**PHOTO CREDITS**

Cover, Pg 2, 4, 10, 12, 14, 16,  
21, 22, 24, 26 : Joe Raffanti  
Pg 8, 18, 20 : Apurva Shroff





## *Looking to the* **FUTURE**

Our groundbreaking solution, “Guatemala Brillando,” is the first-of-its-kind plan to systematically eliminate avoidable blindness in Guatemala by 2032, creating access to eye care for the country’s 17 million people. Now in its third year, Guatemala Brillando launched the Academia de Desarrollo Integral (ADI), which will provide training to allied ophthalmic personnel, administrators, residents and fellows, increasing the capacity of local, skilled eye care personnel. With our partner in the region, Visualiza, we have established 12 Vision Centers and also begun construction on a new eye hospital based in Quiché that will become operational in the first half of 2025. This blueprint will subsequently be scaled across Latin America, and then the world.

As Seva’s work and presence expand, we continue to invest in local talent. This past year, we hired a regional project officer for our work in Africa. In the coming year, we will recruit additional talent in Latin America, as well as in Asia. Seva has worked in Cambodia for 25 years. This year, we relocated our office from Battambang to the capital Phnom Penh to be more centrally located to the provinces we serve, the government, and other stakeholders involved in the nation’s eye care agenda.

Since 2022, in the U.S., we have more than doubled our Native partners who provide eye care services to Native communities, including new partnerships this year with organizations in Ohio and Utah. We remain committed to identifying and working with local organizations around the world ready to bring eye care to overlooked communities.

### *Savitri Joshi, Nepal*

**Savitri** loves to cook, play games with her friends, and her favorite subject at school is science. Though eager to learn, Savitri struggled to see the blackboard, falling behind in class and relying on friends’ notes.

Your support enabled Savitri to receive a pair of eyeglasses, and today she’s back to excelling in school. Savitri told us she wants to become a doctor and give back to her community.

Your support helped Seva provide life-changing eye care services to more than 7.3 million people this year. On their behalf, thank you from the bottom of our hearts! We look forward to working with you in the years to come, as we strive to create a world free of avoidable blindness. If you want to learn more about a specific area of Seva's work, please contact us at [give@seva.org](mailto:give@seva.org). We are happy to provide you with additional information. On behalf of the Seva family, our partners, and everyone we serve around the world, thank you for your continued commitment and generous support!

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