Country Overview

» Location: South America
» Paraguay spans 157,047 square miles
» Population: 7 million
» 2019 Human Development Index Ranking: 98 of 189

Scope of Vision Needs

» 0.55% of Paraguay’s population is blind (28K), as compared to 0.15% in the United States
» 2.34% of the population has moderate to severe vision impairment (121K), as compared to 1.25% in the United States
» 0.08% of global blindness
» 0.06% of global MSVI

Nationwide Eye Care Response

» Paraguay’s 2013 CSR was 1,538 surgeries per million, as compared to the US CSR of 6,353 and WHO target CSR of 300 per million.
» The 2011 CSC=89% (<3/60), exceeding the WHO target of 80%
» In 2013, there were 34 ophthalmologists per million people in Paraguay.
» Data is not currently available for optometrists and AOP
Seva’s Approach in Paraguay

Paraguay’s low population density, along with its subtropical climate, makes this landlocked country an important region for understanding blindness. Most blindness in Paraguay is due to cataract, with many ophthalmologists working in or near the capital city of Asunción. A 2011 Rapid Assessment of Avoidable Blindness showed a significant reduction in blindness due to cataract since 1999, pointing to a substantial improvement in the results and coverage of cataract surgical services.

Seva’s partnership with Fundación Visión has contributed to the greater access of eye care in populations that live outside of Asunción, where much of the blindness is concentrated. Fundación Visión currently performs over 45% of the cataract surgeries being done in the country. Fundación Visión’s state of the art comprehensive eye hospital and training facility is reaching out to help improve access to eye care throughout Paraguay. In addition to the hospital in Asunción, Fundación Visión also has three other clinics and a mobile clinic bringing eye care to the most remote areas of Paraguay. The base hospital also has a residency program that trains future ophthalmologists from across Latin America, exposing them to a way of sustainably providing eye care at a high quality to all who need it. In 2018, Visualiza, DNJ and Fundacion Vision entered into a three-way mentoring partnership through the Global Sight Initiative. Through this partnership, Visualiza and DNJ will work with Fundacion Vision to streamline their systems across the four clinics they operate.

Impact of COVID-19 in Paraguay

COVID-19 continues to have a major impact on the country. Following initial closures, the government has permitted many businesses to reopen. Seva’s partner has been able to resume routine, non-emergency eye care services. In recent months, demand for eye care services has continued to increase. As part of its response to COVID-19, Seva made funds available to its partner in Paraguay to procure necessary protective equipment for its staff.

* Numbers based on reports received.