

Seva Foundation

Sight Program & Center for Innovation in Eye Care



Since 1978, Seva Foundation and partners have worked to make eye care services available and affordable to some of the world's poorest and most vulnerable communities. Seva currently works in close partnership with eye care providers in Nepal, Tibet, Cambodia, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Tanzania, Egypt, and Guatemala.

Global Problems, Local Solutions: Seva's Sight Program focuses on implementing community-based eye care programs that address the leading causes of blindness and visual impairment in the world — cataract and refractive error. Seva bridges the gap between medical providers and communities in need by building the capacity of local people to provide quality, affordable eye care to their own communities. Seva supports the training of local personnel, and fosters opportunities for continuing education and professional development. The Sight Program is guided by the principles of respect, partnership, and service to poor communities that have no access to eye care.

Building Networks: Seva's Center for Innovation in Eye Care works as an advocacy program, building collaboration among international eye care organizations in order to share knowledge, systems, and best practices in the field of eye care. The Center for Innovation in Eye Care applies lessons learned from Seva's 30 year history to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of eye care institutions around the world. One key project is the Global Sight Network of training centers. Each center is increasing the productivity of other eye care institutions in their region of the world.

Compassion in Action: Lack of knowledge about eye health and the high cost of both treatment and transportation are major barriers to people getting the care they need. Seva supports community outreach and education programs to spread awareness of available eye care services. Additionally, Seva provides support to poor patients and their families in order to ensure that no one is turned away for their inability to pay for treatment.

Sustainable Service: Seva's proven model of sustainable development is based on a simple yet effective formula: roughly one-third of patients subsidize the cost of the two-thirds who cannot afford eye care services. Clinics invest the income collected from patients to pay staff salaries, operating costs, and are eventually able to fully sustain their own services, while still providing eye care to those most vulnerable in their communities.



The Problem:

- 285 million people are visually impaired. Of these, 39 million are blind.
- 2 of 3 blind are female
- **80% of blindness is preventable or curable**
- Cataract is the leading cause of blindness

The Solution:

Sight-restoring cataract surgery is performed in 15 minutes

Seva's Goal: To eliminate needless blindness by building the capacity of underserved communities to provide their own high quality, affordable, sustainable eye care services.

Seva's Support Provides:

- Comprehensive eye care services for underserved communities
- Medical and management training
- Surgical equipment and medical supplies
- Community outreach
- Clinical and public health research
- Linkages to a growing partner network

US Contacts:

Dr. Suzanne Gilbert
Director, Center for
Innovation in Eye Care
sgilbert@seva.org

Dr. Chundak Tenzing
Sight Program Director
ctenzing@seva.org

Seva Foundation
1786 Fifth Street
Berkeley, CA 94710
510.845.7382
www.seva.org

Updated March 2011