



Seva Eye Care Program: Pakistan

Providing education and direct services in rural communities

Avoidable Blindness: Approximately 4% of the world's blind live in Pakistan. Of these 1.5 million blind individuals, 1.2 million are blind from curable or preventable causes, primarily cataracts and glaucoma.

The majority of Pakistan's trained ophthalmologists work in urban areas at government or private clinics, making accessible and affordable eye care a concern in rural communities. Women living in rural areas are especially vulnerable, as social constraints inhibit their ability to travel to receive necessary services.

Reaching rural communities: Seva is working to strengthen eye care programs in rural Pakistan with our partner, Comprehensive Health & Education Forum (CHEF) International. Seva's work with CHEF International is focused on providing quality and affordable eye care to the farming community of Takht Bhai. In this community alone, it is estimated that 23,000 people need glasses and 10,000 people are blind, including 5,000 who need cataract surgery.

Seva supports CHEF International with local staff development, operational improvements, and funding for direct services. With this support, Seva has helped CHEF become a resource to other Pakistani eye hospitals. CHEF International is also part of Seva's Global Sight Network and receives direct TOMS support to provide free or subsidized medical treatments, glasses and surgeries for those who cannot otherwise afford these services.

Community Outreach: With support from Seva's Center for Innovation in Eye Care, CHEF International's Community Vision Center has implemented a strong outreach network that educates community members about sight saving services. Through educational outreach, Seva and CHEF International hope to increase local knowledge and acceptance of available services. These outreach efforts are critical to treating some of the most vulnerable populations, primarily women and children in rural communities.

A Sustainable Model: The community vision center in Takht Bhai sustains a unique financial model that subsidizes services with eyeglass sales from the vision center's shop. Instead of having to travel an hour to the nearest optical shop in Mardan, local patients who can afford more fashionable glasses can conveniently purchase them from the vision center. The profits generated from these sales subsidize services for the poor, therefore allowing the vision center to increase its patient volume. Through this model, the vision center is able to cover most of its costs and expand community services.



The Problem:

- 4% of the world's blind live in Pakistan
- Cataract is the leading cause of blindness
- Rural women face considerable barriers to accessing eye care services

The Solution:

Sight-restoring cataract surgery can be performed in just 15 minutes for just \$50

Seva's Goal:

Address rural blindness by investing in local human capital, improved management and direct services.

Seva provides:

- Funding for comprehensive eye care services for underserved, rural communities
- Investment in local human capital through managerial and staff development
- Community outreach and education

Partner:

Comprehensive Health & Education Forum (CHEF) International

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