

# China & Tibet Fact Sheet

## SEVA'S WORK AT A GLANCE: In country since 1995



### Country Overview

- » China spans 3.7 million square miles
- » China's Population: 1.4 billion
- » Tibet's Population: 3.3 million
- » 2021-22 Human Development Index Ranking: 79 of 191<sup>1</sup>

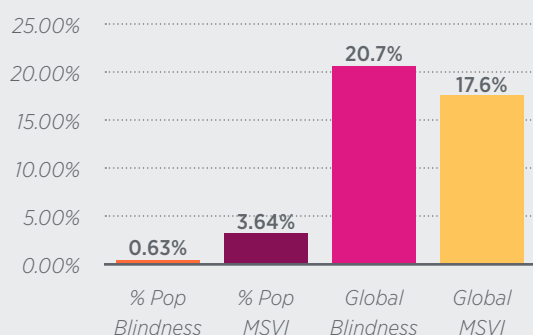
### Scope of Eye Care Needs<sup>2</sup>

- » 0.63% of China's population is blind (8,917,625), as compared to 0.19% in the US
- » 3.64% of the population has moderate to severe vision impairment or MSVI (51,941,774), as compared to 2.02% in the United States
- » China accounts for 20.7% of global blindness and 17.6% of global MSVI
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- » 17.6% of global MSVI

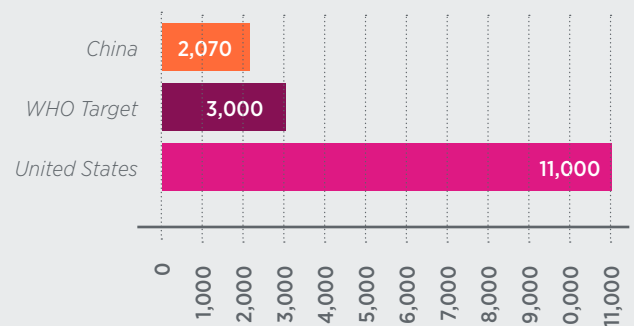
### Nationwide Eye Care Response

- » China's Cataract Surgical Rate (CSR) was 2,070 surgeries per million in 2017, as compared to the US CSR of 11,000
- » 26.4 ophthalmologists per million people (36,342 total)
- » 1.5 optometrists per million people (2,100 total)
- » 38 Allied Ophthalmic Personnel per million people (52,500 total)

#### EYE CARE NEEDS



#### CATARACT SURGICAL RATE PER MILLION PEOPLE



<sup>1</sup> 2021-22 UNDP Human Development Report: [https://hdr.undp.org/system/files/documents/global-report-document/hdr2021-22pdf\\_1.pdf](https://hdr.undp.org/system/files/documents/global-report-document/hdr2021-22pdf_1.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all country sight statistics from IAPB Vision Atlas: <http://atlas.iapb.org/global-action-plan/gap-indicators/>

### Seva's Approach in Western China & Tibet

Seva began working in Tibet in 1995 with a focus on increasing access to eye care through outreach camps and strengthening the capacity of local eye care personnel.

In 2001, Seva partnered with the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) Health Bureau to conduct an assessment on eye care in the region. The resulting outcome showed a high prevalence of blindness due to cataract and poor post-operative visual acuity.<sup>3</sup> The need for comprehensive, quality eye care was evident and propelled Seva to open a regional office in Lhasa in 2003. Since then, Seva has supported eye programs in the Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP). In 2006, Seva and the Ganzi Prefecture People's Hospital formally partnered to support the creation of the Kham Eye Center (KEC) in Dartsedo.

KEC is located in the western region of China, southeast of the Tibet Plateau. This region has a staggering altitude of 11,463 feet, extremely harsh weather and poor transportation infrastructure. Given that the Kham population lives at a high altitude where they endure strong ultraviolet rays, it is estimated that the prevalence of blinding eye disease like cataract in people over 50 years of age may be three times higher than in mainland China.

Although Seva's Tibet office formally closed in 2015, Seva has continued to work with the KEC. Currently, Seva does not have an active partner in China/Tibet but has communicated with the KEC about the possibility of reviving the programs in the future.


### Resources

[Seva's Work in Tibet](#)

[Eye Camps in Tibet](#)

#### EYE CARE PERSONNEL

26.4  Ophthalmologists per million people

1.5  Optometrists per million people

38  Ophthalmic personnel per million people

 = 10 million people

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6858214/>

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