

# Guatemala Fact Sheet

SEVA'S WORK AT A GLANCE: In country since 2006 | Partner: 1



## Country Overview

- » Located in Central America, bordered by the Pacific Ocean, the Caribbean, Mexico, Honduras, Belize, and El Salvador
- » Guatemala spans 42,043 square miles
- » Population: 17.9 million people making it the most populous nation of Central America
- » 2023-2024 Human Development Index Ranking: 136 of 193 countries<sup>1</sup>

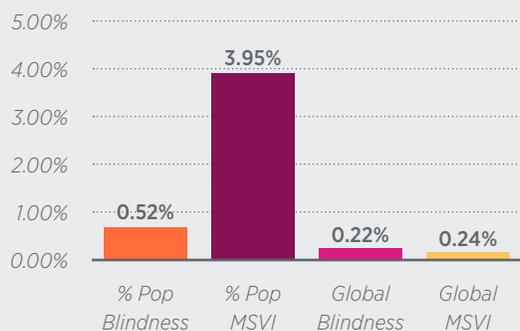
## Scope of Eye Care Needs<sup>2</sup>

- » 0.52% of Guatemala's population is blind as compared to 0.19% in the United States.
- » 3.95% of the population have moderate to severe vision impairment or MSVI as compared to 2.02% in the United States.
- » 0.22% of global blindness
- » 0.24% of global MSVI

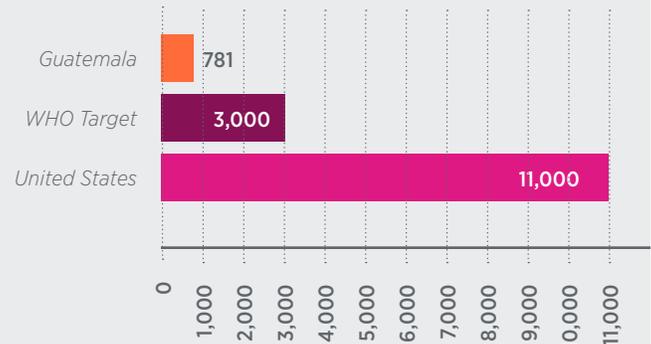
## Nationwide Eye Care Response

- » Guatemala's Cataract Surgical Rate (CSR) was 781 surgeries per million in 2013, as compared to the US CSR of 11,000.
- » 19.9 ophthalmologists per million people in 2015 (325 total)
- » 44.7 optometrists per million people in 2019 (800 total)
- » No data is currently available for allied ophthalmic personnel.

### EYE CARE NEEDS



### CATARACT SURGICAL RATE PER MILLION PEOPLE



<sup>1</sup> UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). 2024. Human Development Report 2023-24: Breaking the gridlock: Reimagining cooperation in a polarized world. New York.

<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all country sight statistics from IAPB Vision Atlas: <https://www.iapb.org/learn/vision-atlas/>

## SPOTLIGHT ON INCREASING ACCESS

Isabel had dealt with blurry vision for three years. Day to day tasks became more difficult for her to do on her own. While commiserating with a friend at her church, she learned about a new vision center that might be able to help her understand why her vision was deteriorating. She visited the local vision center for an exam. They recommended that she go to the hospital because she needed more advanced care. At the hospital, Isabel was diagnosed with cataracts. Isabel did not have the resources to pay for such a surgery. However, she benefited from our partner's World Sight Day celebration and received surgery. The next day, the doctor removed the patch and she could see again!

## Context

In Guatemala, as in much of the Global South, ophthalmologists and eye hospitals use models of eye care that are not efficient to meet the national demand for early detection and sight-restoring interventions - today, 3.5 million Guatemalans live with vision loss, yet 90% of all vision impairment is preventable or treatable when communities have access to eye care. Seva's research projects the cost of visual impairment in Guatemala is \$808M per year. A staggering statistic compared to the coffee industry revenue of \$647M.

## Seva's Approach in Guatemala

**Guatemala Brillando is our 10-year shared plan to end treatable blindness in Guatemala by 2032 - defined as 90% of the population having access to comprehensive, high quality, low cost, or free eye care in their local community.**

"Guatemala Brillando" or "Brighter Guatemala" is a first-of-its-kind plan to systematically eliminate avoidable blindness throughout Guatemala. We are positioned to achieve it in just 10 years and the blueprint can be scaled across the world. Within these 10 years, Guatemala Brillando will develop 30 vision centers and 5 eye hospitals across the country. Today, there are 12 vision centers operating and construction underway for a new hospital in the Quiché region.

### EYE CARE PERSONNEL



Ophthalmologists per million people



Optometrists per million people

= 1 million people

## Resources

[Seva in Guatemala](#)

# GUATEMALA FACT SHEET

## IMPACT (FY 2023-2024)\*

71,312

People receiving services

2,968

Cataract surgeries performed

18,284

Children screened

217

Children receiving glasses

2,742

Children receiving glasses

3

New VCs funded through Seva

1,226,303

People who now have access to care

7,677

People receiving services at VCs

1

Seva led training for 1 hospital with 10 participants

2

AOPs trained

9

Administrators trained



\* Numbers based on reports received.