

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
- » 2021-22 Human Development Index Ranking: 135 of 191 countries¹

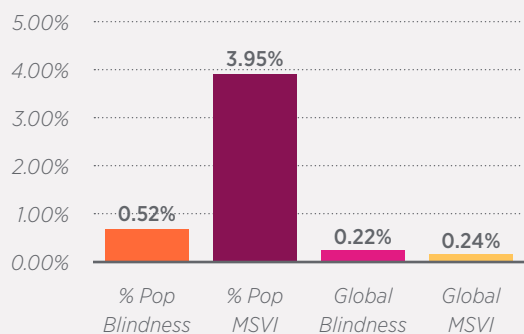
Scope of Eye Care Needs²

- » 0.52% of Guatemala's population is blind (94,000) as compared to 0.19% in the United States.
- » 3.95% of the population have moderate to severe vision impairment or MSVI (705,755) as compared to 2.02% in the United States.
- » 0.22% of global blindness
- » 0.24% of global MSVI

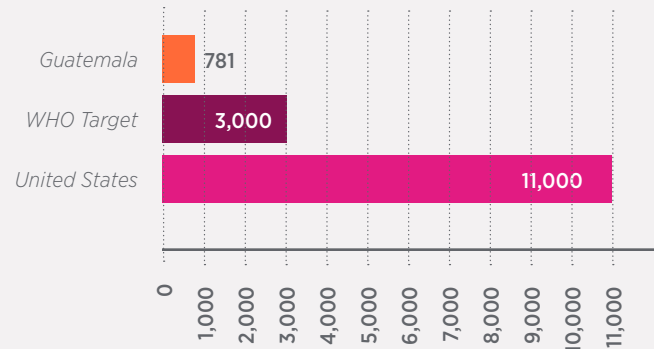
Nationwide Eye Care Response

- » 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



¹ 2021-22 UNDP Human Development Report: https://hdr.undp.org/system/files/documents/global-report-document/hdr2021-22pdf_1.pdf

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

Context

Nearly 75% of people who are blind in Guatemala suffer from preventable or curable causes. There are an estimated 2 million people with vision loss. Of these, 94,000 people are blind.

Seva's Approach in Guatemala

Seva's main partner in Guatemala since 2006 is **Visualiza Clínica Médica Oftalmológica**, known simply as Visualiza. Founded in 1997, the hospital has a unique community-oriented low cost and free service system. They provide private care alongside free vision services for their low-income patients.

With two hospitals and one new surgical center, Visualiza is able to work in both Guatemala City as well as in the rural, northern region of the country, called the Peten. Although Visualiza employs only 2% of the nation's ophthalmologists, the organization performs over 20% of all cataract surgeries in the country.

Seva's approach to addressing eye health needs in Guatemala prioritize three key strategies; **Access** to universal eye care, building **Capacity** of personnel and infrastructure as well as **Evidence**-based interventions and advocacy.

Access to Primary eye care services. Visualiza and Seva support eye care delivery through vision centers that address up to 80% of eye care needs on the spot and refer patients with more complex eye care needs to the hospital. Community promoters provide screenings and door-to-door visits in remote communities as well as distribution of educational materials and radio announcements.

Modern **Technology** for patient care is vital in supporting up to date practices implemented locally. Seva supports Visualiza's robust electronic medical record system to ensure effective follow up with patients and to alert patients of upcoming eye care needs.

Seva, in partnership with Visualiza continues to **expand the ever-growing network of partner hospitals and institutions** in the region by

determining readiness and ability of additional mentees to join the GSI network with our Guatemala partner Visualiza acting as the mentor. By establishing the first Eyexcel Training Program for Latin America, our Guatemalan partner was able to adapt training practices for Allied Ophthalmic Personnel (AOPs). As a result, Visualiza has achieved substantial growth within its own institution as well as expansion to assist other eye care institutions in Guatemala and Central and South America.

Evaluation of performance including personnel, financial sustainability, cost recovery, outreach practices, productivity and quality/efficiency of service delivery are all assessed and tracked.

Impact of COVID-19 in Guatemala

As of September 2022, the COVID-19 infection and death rate have significantly declined. 41.4% of the population is now fully vaccinated. Seva's partner Visualiza continues to provide eye care services while maintaining safety protocols.

EYE CARE PERSONNEL

19.9



Ophthalmologists per million people

44.7



Optometrists per million people

= 10 million people

GUATEMALA FACT SHEET

IMPACT (FY 2021-2022)*

35,769

People receiving services

4,319

Cataract surgeries performed

4,122

Children receiving services

181

Children receiving surgery

3,108

Children receiving glasses

2

New vision centers funded by Seva

131,179

People who now have access to care

4,045

People receiving services at VCs

2

Community Health Promoters trained

1

Eyexcel Webinar

1

Eyexcel Blended Workshop

17

Doctors trained

16

AOPs trained

28

Administrators trained

SPOTLIGHT ON BUILDING CAPACITY

In partnership with Visualiza, “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. Our work and plan have been vetted by leading scientists and experts, and in 2020 was named in the Top 10 list of MacArthur Foundation’s 100&Change solutions to change the world.

Resources

[Seva in Guatemala](#)

* Numbers based on reports received.

GUATEMALA FACT SHEET

