

SEVA'S WORK AT A GLANCE: In country since 1978 | Partners: 50+



Country Overview

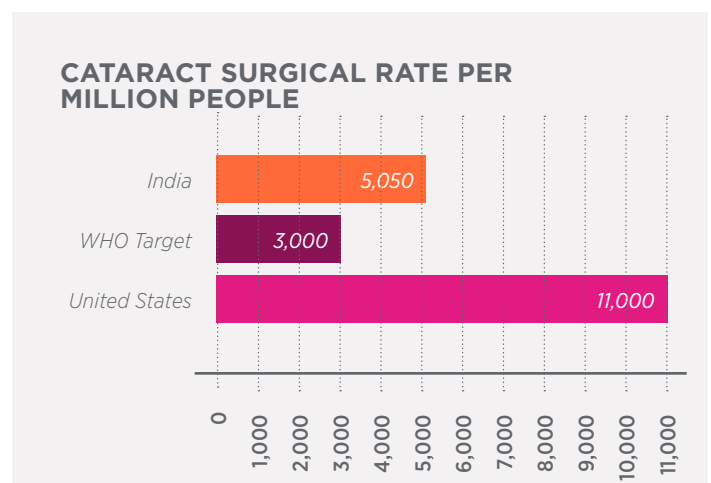
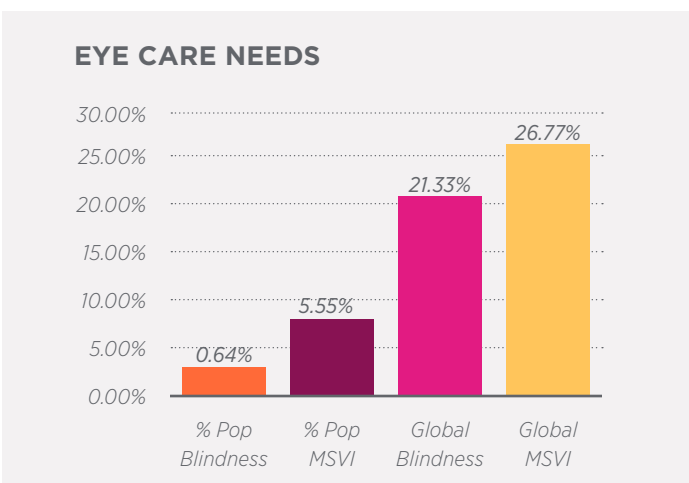
- » Shares borders with six countries: China, Bangladesh, Burma, Nepal, Bhutan and Pakistan
- » India spans 1.9 million square miles
- » Population: 1.38 billion, India is close behind China as of 2022 as the world's most populous nation
- » 2021-22 Human Development Index Ranking: 132 of 191 countries¹

Scope of Eye Care Needs²

- » 0.64% of India's population is blind, as compared to 0.19% in the United States.
- » 5.55% of the population have moderate severe visual impairment or MSVI, as compared to 2.02% in the United States.
- » IAPB estimates 270 million people with Vision loss in India; Of these, 9.2 million people were blind, one of the highest in the world.

Nationwide Eye Care Response

- » India's Cataract Surgical Rate (CSR) was 5,050 in 2014, as compared to the US CSR of 11,000
- » 13 ophthalmologists per million people in 2018 (22,000 total)
- » 39.1 optometrists per million people in 2020 (54,000 total)
- » 29 allied ophthalmic personnel per million people in 2019 (40,000 total)



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

India has an extraordinarily diverse terrain, from the Himalayan peaks to the Indian Ocean coastline. With a population of over 1.4 billion, it's the world's largest democracy and as of 2020 close behind China as the world's most populous nation. While wealth has been rising in India, not everyone has shared in this growth.

The country continues to tackle huge social, economic and environmental challenges while poverty remains an issue, reflected in the fact that 73% of the adult population has wealth below 10,000 USD,¹ whereas average wealth per adult in North America is \$446,638 USD.² Property and other real assets make up 86% of estimated household wealth in India, which is typical for developing countries. Property and other real assets make up 86% of estimated household wealth in India, which is typical for developing countries. The human development index's most recent measurement for India's Gross national income (GNI) per capita (constant 2017 PPP\$) in 2019 was \$6,681. Compared to the US's GNI of \$63,826 from that same year, this is quite a significant disparity.

India became an independent state in 1947, after gaining its sovereignty from the United Kingdom, though the country's history reaches back 5 millennia. Home to some of the world's most ancient surviving civilizations, the Indian subcontinent is both vast and diverse in terms of its people, language and cultural traditions. According to the 2011 census (which is the most recent for the country), 79.8% of the population of India practices Hinduism and 14.2% observe Islam, while the remaining 6% adheres to other religions (Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism and various indigenous ethnically-bound faiths). Christianity is the 3rd largest religion in India.³

In 2020 in India, there were an estimated 270 million people with vision loss. Nearly 0.64% of India's total population, or over 9 million people, is blind. By assessing India's **Burden of Blindness**, we are able to reveal just how severely blindness or moderate to severe visual impairment (MSVI) imposes a challenge to this population.

Seva's Approach in India

Seva started working in India in 1978 and has been consistently invested in the development of eye care service strategies, research, and resource institutions in the last four decades. At present, Seva works with more than 60 hospital partners and 6 mentor institutions including Aravind Eye Care System, Dr. Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital, HV Desai Eye Hospital, L V Prasad Eye Institute, Sadguru Netra Chikitsalaya and Vivekananda Mission Ashram Netra Niramay Niketan serving across 18 Indian states and union territories. In the last five years (2017 to 2021), apart from investment in capacity building of more than 60 partner hospitals across the country, Seva's partner in the country has provided services to more than 13 million patients, completed 1.54 million surgeries and screened more than 500,000 children. Seva's investments have resulted in the establishment of more than 120 Vision centers, direct training of thousands of clinical and non-clinical personnel, and development of institutional training and research capabilities in select partners across the country.

The blindness and visual impairment costs India a total of \$54.4 billion at purchasing power parity exchange rates every year. That cost is only likely to grow as India's population ages and becomes wealthier. Poor eye health imposes a recurring cost to the Indian economy equivalent to 0.6% of GDP, resulting in a substantial constraint on the country's growth aspirations. Most of this loss is due to reductions in economic productivity.⁴

¹ The Credit Suisse Research Institute, Global wealth report 2020, www.credit-suisse.com/about-us/en.html Pg 44

² The Credit Suisse Research Institute, Global wealth report 2020, www.credit-suisse.com/about-us/en.html Pg 8

³ 2021-22 UNDP Human Development Report: https://hdr.undp.org/system/files/documents/global-report-document/hdr2021-22pdf_1.pdf

⁴ The Economic and Social Cost of Visual Impairment and Blindness in India: https://www.seva.org/site/DocServer/Seva_Cost_of_Visual_Impairment_in_India.pdf

Seva's approach to addressing eye health needs in India prioritize three key strategies: **Access** to universal eye care, building **Capacity** of personnel and infrastructure as well as **Evidence**-based interventions and advocacy. These primary strategies are otherwise referred to as ACE, thoughtfully incorporated into all Seva partnership programs from delivery to post-care assessment.

Seva supports primary eye care services through the establishment of vision centers (VCs) and funding directcare at key partner hospitals throughout the country. Services include adult outpatient care, pediatric services and eye screening camps. Pediatric services support school screenings, teacher trainings, glasses and surgical services, and health education of parents, students and teachers. Community outreach activities include screenings and door-to-door visits in remote communities as well as distribution of educational materials and radio announcements.

Seva's commitment to improve access to eye care through innovative technology has resulted the exploration and development of technical interventions such as:

- 1) Artificial intelligence assisted Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP) screenings on multiple lower-cost camera system
- 2) Development of cloud-based, mobile application for remote monitoring of clinical quality and referral from VCs to hospitals
- 3) Developing a smart phone-based system to diagnose corneal disease, prescribe treatment, and help prevent it in some patients through Seva partners in India.

Modern technology for patient care is vital in supporting up to date practices implemented locally. By purchasing clinical equipment for partner hospitals as well as supporting the implementation of tele-ophthalmology within VCs and base hospitals, Seva and our partners ensure an increase in availability of quality services for all of India. With the establishment of tele-ophthalmology services, Seva-supported VCs can get a second opinion from doctors based at referral tertiary eye hospitals.

Tele-ophthalmology will thus improve quality of care and improve referral by limiting unnecessary travel and crowding at the clinics providing specialized services — only patients who require surgery or specialized care will need to go to the hospital.

By focusing on smart solutions and building partners capacity in Evidence based decision making with the support of data dashboard, Hospital Management Systems and training — which includes Eyexcel, fellowships, joint learning events and conferences — as well as tracking data collection and evaluations, hospitals and local communities alike are more equipped to build out their capacity and more effectively serve their populations. Seva with our partners, provide trainings for local doctors in ophthalmology residencies and short-term clinical advancement, allied ophthalmic personnel, as well as teachers for school screenings. Attending professional conferences and meetings allows our partners to share program findings with a broader community of specialists.

SPOTLIGHT ON VISION CENTERS

In 2022, Seva announced a new initiative “ENVISION: Enabling Primary Eye care through Vision Centers in India” in collaboration with Standard Chartered Bank (SCB) with aim to establish 65 vision centers in the next eighteen months. This initiative strengthens Seva's commitment to establishing Primary Eye Care Vision Centers as one of its core drivers. The collaboration brings eye care to an additional 4 million people across the country. Collectively, this initiative will provide more than 400,000 eye exams, 67,000 glasses, and will enable 16,000 eye surgeries through newly established Vision Centers in the states of Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal by year 2024. Out of the targeted 65 Primary eye care Vision Centers, almost 40 Vision centers have already started providing services to patients as of September 2022.

Impact of COVID-19 in India

India has reported a total of 44.5 million COVID-19 cases with more than 1 billion people with at least one dose of the vaccine. Seva’s Partner hospitals are providing all types of eye health services with the majority of them being fully operational to cover the backlog of cases. Outreach to remote communities is also fully operational. Vision Centers continue to be a focus and outreach staff are deployed for door to door screening by select partners at various levels depending on safety measures and needs of the area. Seva and partners continue to strengthen Vision Centers with a renewed focus towards tele-ophthalmology. Seva continues to provide essential protective equipment and other support to partner hospitals so that they can continue working with standard precautions to protect themselves and patients.

EYE CARE PERSONNEL

13



Ophthalmologists per million people

39.1



Optometrists per million people

29



Ophthalmic personnel per million people

= 10 million people

IMPACT (FY 2021-2022)*

2,136,754

People receiving services

530,529

Cataract surgeries performed

61,724

Children screened

1,869

Children receiving surgery

15,542

Children receiving glasses

15

New VCs funded through Seva

1,111,932

People who now have access to care

56,056

People receiving services at VCs

18

Doctors trained

2

Eyexcel Webinars

1

hospital and 1 training institution (iiph-h) participating in eyexcel

29

People participating in Eyexcel

308

AOPS trained

99

Administrators trained

Resources

[Seva in India](#)

[The Economic and Social Costs of Visual Impairment and Blindness in India](#)

[Costs and cost-effectiveness of major eye health interventions in India](#)

[Primary eye care in India - The vision center model](#)

* Numbers based on reports received.

INDIA FACT SHEET

