



# IMPACT REPORT

July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021



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# *To Our Friends in Service*

## A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

If you want to be pushed in unimaginable ways - come and be part of a public health organization amidst a global pandemic. In early 2020, as we set our plans for the coming year, staff and partners alike looked into the unknown. We scrambled to homeschool our kids, we were worried about family and community members - and yet, we had a sense that something good might come from all the chaos. More importantly, might inventions, solutions, and approaches that result from such a pressure cooker influence how we work, for years to come? The answer is a resounding - yes.

*How did we do it?* We rapidly assessed the global landscape. Over a few months, we set up feedback loops that gave both staff and partners a platform to share ideas for how best to meet the demands of eye care, while protecting frontline care providers. Recognizing the great unknown and supporting the talent of our worldwide staff, Seva Foundation Board of Directors established an Angel Fund that gave my team and me the ability to allocate additional funding in the areas of Safety, Vision Centers and Innovation. The results benefited millions of individuals.

As you read through the achievements, know that your support is a cornerstone as to why it was possible. You allowed us to roll up our sleeves, embrace the concept of agility - and in doing so, build solutions skillfully out of necessity. We developed and published the first national COVID-19 SOP (standard operating procedures) for eye hospitals in Nepal; and also successfully implemented our technology call for ideas, providing community-based teams the opportunity to imagine and design solutions for better eye care. One area where we stumbled - collectively - was in reaching children. With schools shut down across the globe, we needed to find effective and safe ways to provide outreach for children. Especially so, because with kids - treating eye care conditions is one of the most cost-effective poverty alleviating interventions. Thankfully, our partners found new ways to reach families.

We've advanced our work with Native communities through our American Indian Sight Initiative. Native Nations disproportionately suffer from vision impairment due to poverty, geographic isolation, and cultural differences. This past year we worked with indigenous partners to expand access to health and wellness services while also laying the groundwork for future technology solutions to expand eye health equity.

As we met the challenges presented this year, we did not lose sight of our long-term plans. With leading experts, we will launch a groundbreaking retinal camera that will revolutionize how eye care clinics diagnose diseases. In a paradigm-shifting year we held our ground firmly. Seva partners and teams provided life-changing eye care services to 2.8 million men, women, and children. In the pages that follow, you'll read firsthand about the innovation and bravery our Seva team demonstrated to make this possible.

On behalf of an impassioned staff and board - thank you for making the world brighter, with your generosity.

Yours in Seva,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kate Moynihan'. The signature is written over a horizontal line.

**Kate Moynihan**  
Executive Director

# WHY SIGHT?

One billion people live with a vision impairment that could have been prevented or has yet to be addressed according to the World Health Organization (WHO). A life without clear vision is a life limited in freedom, independence, and dignity. For marginalized people in the developing world, vision loss is catastrophic and a principal threat to dignity.

Mothers and fathers who lose their sight lose the ability to care for themselves, and they also lose the ability to provide for their families. Children with impaired vision are forced to drop out of school and are often ostracized by their peers. Older family members lose their independence and require extra care from their younger relatives. When one person loses their sight, an entire community suffers.

***With your help, and access to vision care - we can change that.***

# OUR VISION

*A world free of avoidable blindness.*

Restoring sight is the most cost-effective intervention to reduce poverty. It has an immediate and profound impact on the patient who can now see, study, learn and earn a living. Additionally, restoring one's sight creates a positive ripple effect on family and community, all benefiting from the start of recovery, leading to greater contributions from everyone.

Since 1978, Seva has transformed lives by restoring sight in communities with little or no access to eye care. Today, Seva is a highly effective global nonprofit organization, working with partners in 20 countries to increase the capacity of local hospitals and develop sustainable eye care programs with long-term impact.

***Thanks to your support, Seva has provided vital eye care services to more than 46.8 million people in the world, including 2.8 million people in the last year alone.***

Seva's vision is a world in which no one lives with avoidable blindness. With your help, we can make that vision a reality in our lifetime



▲ **Pakistan, 2020**

Mr. Aurangzeb is a farmer, husband, and father of eight living in the village of Buner, Pakistan. Five years ago, he noticed that his vision was becoming blurry in his right eye.

Without his eyesight, Aurangzeb feared that he would no longer be able to provide for his family. Through our partner Comprehensive Health & Education Forum (CHEF) International, that worry was put to rest - he received cataract surgery for free, could see clearly again, and continue to support his family for years to come.

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**WHERE  
YOUR  
GOOD  
DID THE  
MOST**

*Because of you,*

**2,835,532**

*people received eye care services in 2020-2021.*

**1,441,152**

*were women or girls.*



## VISION CENTERS

**45**

Vision Centers established in 2020-2021

**6,465,306**

People gained access to essential eye care services through Vision Centers

**63,635**

People received services at Vision Centers



## EYE CARE FOR CHILDREN

**158,761**

Children screened

**20,348**

Children received glasses

**6,341**

Children received surgery



## TECHNOLOGY

Our current areas of focus in the pipeline include: portable, low-cost **diagnostic devices**; access to **affordable medications**; new **telemedicine software**, enabling us to reach isolated communities; and advanced **digitization of medical records**.



## TRAINING AND JOB CREATION

**96**

Doctors trained

**229**

Ophthalmic support staff trained

**102**

Administrators trained

**137**

Community Health Promoters trained

*of these*

**301**

were Women

**10**

Eyexcel trainings completed, including 3 workshops, 6 training webinars, and 1 online course.

**46**

Eyexcel hospitals

**187**

Eyexcel participants



Seva's partners have always worked diligently to reach underserved communities around the world. And during the pandemic, that meant adapting to new technologies and using telemedicine when required. The reality is, whether in-person or virtually, the level and attention of care a patient receives will be the same - their lives will transform for decades to come.



▲ **Geria Apio's** eyesight was restored in 2017. The resilient grandmother had lost 12 children to the wars in her country, Uganda, over the past few decades. She was also totally blind from cataract. Upon learning of a Seva-supported outreach program, her son brought her to the Lira Regional Hospital, several hours away, to receive an operation by Dr. Patrick. That day, Geria received her sight and her life back. Here she is, smiling joyously surrounded by her grandchildren.

# OUR WORK

## *Building Sustainable Eye Care Systems Worldwide.*

*Seva builds sustainable eye care systems and empowers local communities to provide eye care for themselves. There are three pillars to our strategy that make our vision a reality:*



## *Creating* **ACCESS**

Many people in need of vision services live in hard-to-reach, isolated communities. When you support Seva, you ensure that people who need eye care the most have it, irrespective of who they are or where they live. We create access by providing partners with medical supplies, infrastructure, and the technology required to guarantee patients receive comprehensive vision care for free or at an affordable cost. By taking a holistic approach to eye care, we also secure basic needs (e.g. transportation, food, or lodging) for patients whose circumstances limit or prevent them from accessing treatment.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, our partners were in critical need of personal protective equipment (PPE) this year. The Seva Foundation Board of Trustees wisely established an Angel Fund. Seva Staff were able to distribute and allocate PPE worldwide, enabling our partners to continue sight-restoring work. In Africa, funds were allocated to five partner hospitals to acquire masks, gloves, hand sanitizers, and face shields. In India and Nepal, Seva invested in critical oxygen infrastructure for 17 partner hospitals, additionally providing COVID-19 vaccinations and food distribution. Throughout Latin America, we invested in mobile screening vans to bring vision care safely to hard-to-reach communities who otherwise would have had to travel amidst the pandemic.

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**▼ India, 2020**

*Dr. Prateek Jain is an ophthalmologist at the J. Watum Global Hospital & Research Centre in Rajasthan, India. A devoted family man, Dr. Jain worried about catching COVID-19 at work and then exposing his wife and 6-year-old daughter. Seva supplied his hospital with surgical gloves, masks, and other protective equipment. Now he can serve his community while keeping his family safe.*

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▲ **Bangladesh, 2020.**

*The smile on this young girl's face says it all. She was part of a free eye screening at a middle school in Bangladesh on the island of Mehendiganj. Everyone at her school, as well as the rest of her community, received a free eye screening that day. Several patients were referred back to a secondary hospital for further care.*

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# *Building* **CAPACITY**

## **The Global Sight Initiative (GSI)**

is our methodology and how we work with our network of 100 hospitals in low and middle-income countries around the world. This methodology connects “mentor” institutions with “mentee” institutions, whereby one provides training, mentoring, research, and consultancy to the other. This mutual learning process is the most effective, efficient, and scalable way to impart skills and knowledge, and expand our global eye care programs. Seva rigorously trains ophthalmic support staff in management, clinical skills, community outreach, and a myriad of other roles required for a strong program. Seva also works to implement comprehensive training and quality protocols that ensure patients are seen in the safest ways possible. This year, with the ongoing impact of the pandemic, Seva Cambodia held a virtual training on COVID-19 safety and quality when conducting outreach screening, including providing staff best practices on handwashing, screening, masks, and social distancing. Their subsequent Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) was approved by the National Program for Eye Health within the Ministry of Health.

This year, you made it possible to train 300 doctors and ophthalmic support staff. By doing so, these doctors will provide sustainable care to their communities more effectively and efficiently, long after our direct involvement has ended and for years and years to come.

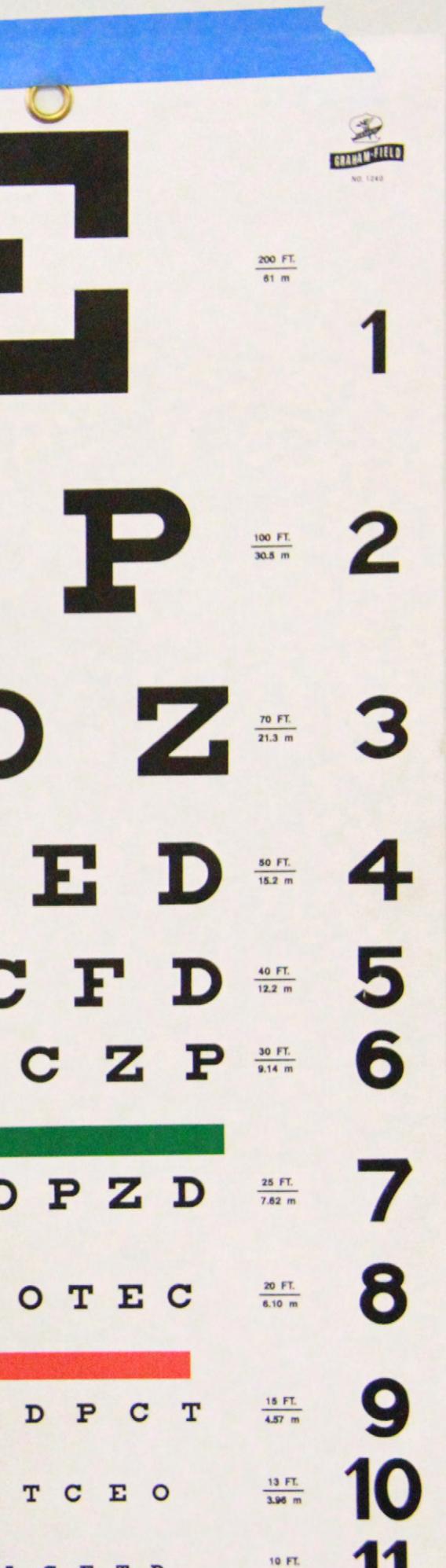
### **Tanzania, 2020**

*Happiness Tuvana is a Program Manager at Benjamin Mkapa Hospital, Dodoma, a clinic that works with Kilimanjaro Centre for Community Ophthalmology (KCCO), Seva’s partner in Tanzania. She performs outreach to isolated rural communities, informing patients how and where they can find eye care. She tells patients that they don’t have to be afraid of the eye clinic - help is there, just waiting for them! They trust her, because she takes the time to listen to their stories and empathize with their challenges.*



▶ *Conducting eye screenings, like for this patient at a high school on the Navajo Rez in New Mexico, is critical to identify people at risk of vision loss, or in need of further assessment.*





*Collecting and Learning from*  
**EVIDENCE**

From the beginning, Seva has meticulously and systematically collected data to inform our strategic approach. This enables us to better identify the specific needs of each community we serve, and how best to maximize our impact.

We are an organization dedicated to evidence-based public health research. Earlier this year, Seva sponsored the Lancet Commission Report on Global Eye Health and the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness' Vision Atlas. This groundbreaking report is a roadmap for how to proceed forward. From the report, we learned that vision loss results in \$410.7 billion in lost productivity annually, and with aging populations, the need for eye care will sadly increase. Fortunately, 90% of all vision loss is preventable or treatable. This report further affirms Seva's approach and commitment to investing in eye health improves wellbeing, economic activity, and productivity.

Seva's Operations Research Capacity Building initiative builds research skills across selected partners in India, Nepal, and Cambodia. Practical, program-defined projects include children's eye care follow-up, diabetic retinopathy referral, and strategies to improve community screening to build vision center usership and awareness of treatable eye problems.



# SEVA'S DRIVERS OF SUCCESS

*Creating a world where everyone can see requires meticulous measurement on the impact of our work - the "Four Drivers" enable us to track the efficacy of our solutions and to stay ahead of the curve.*



## VISION CENTERS

Most people in rural areas do not have access to quality eye care because hospitals are located at great distances. A Vision Center (VC) is a locally-based, permanent facility equipped to meet 80% of all community eye care needs. On average, a VC will treat 3,600 patients a year, provide 360 pairs of glasses, and refer 300 patients for additional services (including 125 for surgery, the most common surgery being cataract, the leading cause of blindness globally).

This year, you helped fund our 131st VC in five years - our first in Peru (with Divino Niño Jesús hospital) and Mexico (with Instituto Mexicano de Oftalmología), respectively. Our longtime partner in India, Aravind Eye Care System, opened its **100th eye care facility** in the southeastern Indian town of Eral. Depending on the region, a single VC creates immediate access to long-term eye care for 50,000 to 500,000 people.



## TECHNOLOGY

Seva invests in and develops ground-breaking technologies that revolutionize eye care. We are close to releasing our new retinal camera, a camera we think will save lives. Once we complete rigorous field tests, it will revolutionize the way eye care clinics diagnose diseases that affect the back of the eye, including CMV retinitis and diabetic retinopathy.

Last year, we announced a Call for Ideas to identify innovative technology-based solutions to improve eye care delivery. One of our finalists, the University of Washington (UW) at Bothell proposed the EYE Toolbox, a cloud-based package of cutting-edge telemedicine software. They project that over the next two years, the Toolbox will allow UW to remotely diagnose and treat hundreds of Native American children who live in the isolated Yakima Valley region of Washington State. This technology has the potential to scale up, reaching children in schools and isolated areas across the country and even the rest of the world.

Seva invests in tried-and-true technology to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of outreach initiatives, vision screenings, hospital flow, and to multiply the efforts of on-demand eye care specialists around the world. Telemedicine breaks down the geographical distance barriers. Maintaining digitized medical records allows us to analyze data, find patterns and detect diseases earlier.

### ▼ ***Seva's "Camera That Saves Lives"***

*developed in partnership with Remidio Innovative Solutions, is currently undergoing rigorous field testing with our partner clinics. We project that this device will save the sight of millions of AIDS patients worldwide - and save tens of thousands of lives.*





▲ **Mexico, 2021**

When little Yamileth Nieves Amoret was five months old, her mother began to worry that the baby girl couldn't see clearly. She brought her to Instituto Mexicano de Oftalmología (IMO), Seva's partner in Querétaro, Mexico - and not a moment too soon. The hospital diagnosed her with cataract. Without surgery, her vision might not have developed properly. Thankfully, IMO provides low-cost or free high-quality care to low-income patients. When the doctors removed her eyepatch, Yamileth smiled and let out a big belly laugh!

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## EYE CARE FOR CHILDREN

80% of what we learn is processed visually. Today, more than 90 million children and adolescents live with some form of visual impairment. If not diagnosed early and treated on time, eye conditions can affect a child's growth, health, and limit future opportunities in their life.

Seva prioritizes comprehensive eye care for children - from screening and early identification of eye care needs to referral, provision of care, and long-term follow-up. Our programs are embedded in schools as well as local communities that help us reach the next generation most efficiently.

When COVID-19 temporarily paused in-person services, our partner in India, Dr. Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital took to the streets to screen every single person for eye-related issues. During FY20-21, they screened an impressive 50,000 people including 23,000 children door-to-door, providing eyeglasses and conducting surgeries when needed. Similarly, many other Seva partners in India have begun their own community-level, door-to-door screening initiatives to also meet patients exactly where they are.



## TRAINING AND JOB CREATION

68% of countries are home to only 5% of the world's ophthalmologists. Most of these ophthalmologists are concentrated in major cities. This leaves millions of blind and visually impaired people who live in rural areas without access to essential care.

We strengthen and expand the global eye care workforce with sustainability and equity in mind. With your support, we hire and train ophthalmologists, ophthalmic support staff, and community outreach workers giving special preference to underrepresented women, directly from the locales where they serve. This means that the limited number of ophthalmologists can direct their time to more complex procedures, like surgery, while support staff attend to other patients and isolated communities can be cared for by people who understand their unique needs.

Last year, we launched Eyexcel 2.0, a new-and-improved version of our "training the trainers" program developed in collaboration with our partner, Aravind Eye Care System. Designed for eye hospital trainers to teach ophthalmic support staff, the program provides a five-day immersion workshop and online components for an in-depth learning experience.

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

Native Americans disproportionately suffer from higher rates of preventable and treatable eye conditions. Poverty, geographic isolation, and finding culturally appropriate providers often prevent Indigenous communities from accessing the treatment they need.

Seva's American Indian Sight Initiative exists to meet the eye care needs of the 9.5 million indigenous peoples throughout the United States. We structure collaborative, locally-based partnerships with hospitals and clinics in and near Indigenous land, like the Oklahoma City Indian Clinic (OKCIC), to enable Native communities to access health and wellness services year-round. Last year, OKCIC provided care to more than 20,000 Native American patients in central Oklahoma.

▶  
**USA, 2021**

*When Skyler arrived at OKCIC, she hadn't seen an eye doctor in five years - she couldn't find affordable, accessible treatment, and her deteriorating vision was causing headaches. Through **Seva's American Indian Sight Initiative**, Skyler received two pairs of eyeglasses from our partner OKCIC. Now Skyler can see clearly again, her headaches are gone, and she can focus on her work without pain.*





▲ **Peru, 2020**

*Last December, Mary Luz Contreras Ramos completed her training to be an ophthalmic nurse at Clinica Oftalmológica Divino Niño Jesús (DNJ), our partner in Peru. She sees ophthalmology as her calling, because there is a great need for it in her country. "There are few places where ophthalmology services are provided," she says. "This affects the elderly who don't have economic resources and have no way to care for themselves, since in some places the costs are a bit high."*

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▲ **India**

*Uday Gozmiar was a pastor in West Bengal, India when he was trained through a Seva-supported program to carry out basic pediatric eye screenings in local classrooms. He was surprised to find that his own son, John, had bilateral cataracts which explained why he was having trouble interacting with other kids. Uday took John to receive surgery and glasses, and he's now back in school with no difficulties. John is pictured here with his father and mother.*

**PHOTO CREDITS**

Pg 1: Jon Kaplan, Nepal, 2007  
Pg 2: Julie Nestingen, Cambodia, 2016  
Pg 5: Mr. Aziz Ur Rehman, Pakistan, 2020  
Pg 6: Julie Nestingen, Guatemala, 2015  
Pg 8-9: Joe Raffanti, Uganda, 2017  
Pg 11: LV Prasad Eye Institute, India, 2020  
Pg 12: Joe Raffanti, Bangladesh, 2020  
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Pg 17: Remidio Innovative Solutions  
Pg 18: Instituto Mexicano de Oftalmología, Mexico, 2021  
Pg 20: Oklahoma City Indian Clinic, Oklahoma, USA, 2021  
Pg 21: Clinica Oftalmológica Divino Niño Jesús, Peru  
Pg 22: Joe Raffanti, West Bengal, 2016  
Pg 26: Rebecca Gaal, Guatemala, 2019



## *Looking forward to the* **FUTURE**

This year, the UN adopted the 'Vision for Everyone'. This resolution is the first agreement designed to tackle preventable sight loss and enshrines eye health as part of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

Seva Foundation spent decades supporting advocacy work to end avoidable blindness. And we have a Strategic Plan rooted in scientific data to get us there. As we scale successful winners of our Technology Call for Ideas - we will keep a close eye on the furtherment of equity in eye care through groundbreaking technology. The technology developed will live in the Vision Centers across the globe. Over the years we have proven that these centers are the most effective methods to meet patients with critical eye care services.

Now, we are fastidiously working with local partners and public health experts to expand the capacity and offerings, ultimately creating access to Vision Centers for millions more in hard-to-reach, isolated locations. Seva Foundations' unique methodology and a comprehensive approach to eye care puts equity at the forefront.

***By tackling vision impairment issues, we can provide communities the ability to reclaim their dignity, unlock their freedom, and secure their independence.***

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*Your support helped Seva give life-changing eye care services to more than 2.8 million people this year. On their behalf, thank you from the bottom of our hearts! We look forward to working with you in the years to come, as we strive to create a world where no one loses their vision unnecessarily.*

*If you want to learn more about a specific area of Seva's work, please let us know by contacting us at [give@seva.org](mailto:give@seva.org). We are happy to provide you with additional information. On behalf of the Seva family, our partners, and everyone we serve around the world, thank you for your continued commitment and generous support!*

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1786 Fifth Street, Berkeley, CA 94710-1716 |  
[www.seva.org](http://www.seva.org)

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