



TRANSFORMING LIVES
BY RESTORING SIGHT

**SIGHT FOR
1 MILLION CHILDREN**
JANUARY - JUNE 2019

PROGRAM GOAL

In 2018, Seva and our donors came together and forged a commitment to reach 1 million children around the world with eye care services by 2020. As of June 30, 2019, we have screened 790,884 children toward our target goal, and will easily reach our goal of 1,000,000 on or before December 31, 2020.

Around the world, 19 million children under the age of 15 have impaired vision, including 12 million with vision impairment due to refractive error and 1.4 million with blindness. Approximately three-quarters of the world's blind children live in the poorest regions of Africa and Asia.

Good vision is critical for good futures - 80% of what a child learns is processed through the visual system. A child's ability to fully participate in and benefit from educational, social and eventually professional activities needs clear vision.



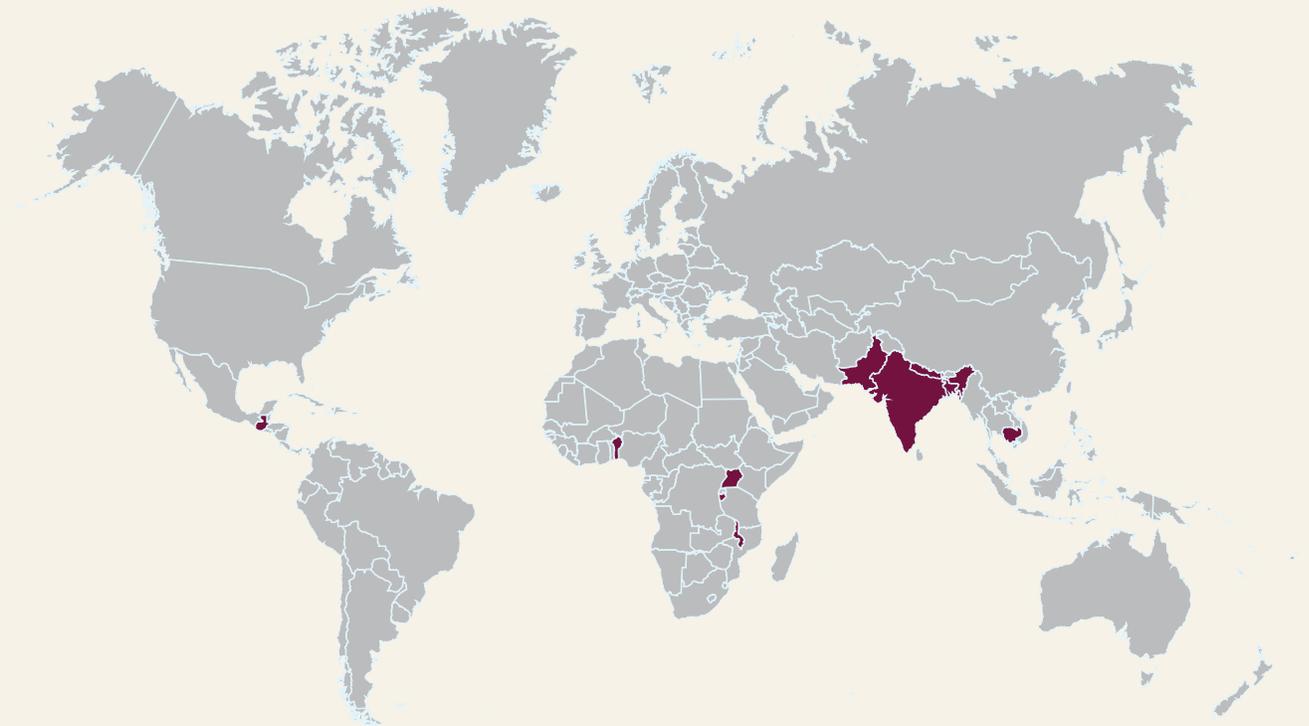
PHOTO ABOVE: Over 90% of visually impaired children in low income countries are deprived of education, which diminishes career opportunities and creates stress within families to support the needs of the blind child.

ON THE COVER: Ayan and his sister pause their playing during a check-up at a partner hospital to get Ayan a new pair of glasses. Ayan had his first eye checkup a year back and the glasses changed his life. The first thing he does in the morning is reach for his glasses. They allow him to see the world clearly and to play confidently. This year he starts school, and with his glasses, he has the opportunity to thrive in his classes.

WHERE WE WORK

Seva works with partners to provide needed eye care for children in:

- Bangladesh
- Cambodia
- India
- Malawi
- Burundi
- Guatemala
- Nepal
- Uganda



PROGRAM IMPACT



790,884

CHILDREN
SCREENED



7,681

SURGERIES



22,841

GLASSES



13

PARTNERS

8 COUNTRIES: LIVES CHANGED

The following stories highlight the impact these efforts have made in the lives of the children, their families and communities.



BURUNDI

Darlene, 4 years old, and Myriam, 2 years old, live with their family in Burundi. The sisters were born with cataracts in both eyes. Their mother sensed something was wrong and took them to the local health center but the health center staff were not able to help her daughters. Based on feedback from the health clinic, the family tried their best to care for their daughters.

The girls' mother and grandmother took turns caring for them while they went to work on the farm. "We had to be very keen for them to not get injured or involved in an accident," their grandmother noted. "It was a distressing situation in the family. We didn't know how to take care of a blind child."

One day, while at the market, a man approached Darlene and Myriam's mother. He had been trained by Seva's partner hospital to recognize signs that someone had vision problems. He told their mom about the eye hospital and that they might be able to help. After a week of his persistence, the family agreed. Once at the hospital, the doctor diagnosed the girls with cataract and performed the surgery.

Today, the girls' lives are completely different. Now they can walk freely without fear, they are able to play and feed themselves. Darlene's mother is already making plans for her to begin school – an unfathomable idea a few months back. Even more importantly, Darlene and Myriam can look around the world and see their bright future ahead for themselves.

8 COUNTRIES: LIVES CHANGED



GUATEMALA

Emily grew up in a poor family in Guatemala City. Ever since she started going to school, her parents realized that Emily's vision was not right. Soon the school principal told them that Emily could not see her books, her notebooks, and that she had to go up to the blackboard to write down what her teacher told her.

The economic situation of her parents was strained. Her father, the family's sole provider, works as an assistant accountant and earns minimum wage. It has been very difficult for her parents to buy the glasses that would correct Emily's problem and they were distressed because they could not help her properly. They did not have enough money for their daily needs much less for this additional expense.

Despite their financial concerns, they wanted to make sure their daughter got the care she needed. They took her to Visualiza, Seva's partner in Guatemala, to get an eye exam. Because of our partnership, Visualiza was able to waive the costs. Since Visualiza helped Emily obtain her glasses at no cost, her life has changed radically.

Today, Emily feels more excited when she goes to school and can see everything that happens around her. Now she fully understands the lessons taught by her teacher and does not need to stand in front of the blackboard to write down her assignments.

Her parents report that she is a happier girl; she learns her lessons more easily and her teacher notes that she shares more time with her classmates. At home she shares more joy with her parents and her little sister.

8 COUNTRIES: LIVES CHANGED



INDIA

Born and raised in New Delhi, Muskaan was born small and weak. Her mother had given birth to her at home without proper care. She was very small for her age as she had problems drinking her mother's milk. Her parents worried about her but as time went by, Muskaan grew up, although she was still very fragile. Life went on for the Hussain family and another daughter was born. Resources were scarce for the family as her father worked in a sewing machine factory and his salary, the only one in the family, was meager.

As Muskaan neared the age of 15, there was an eye camp which was set up in her school. All the girls were very excited to get their eyes tested. As Muskaan's turn came, the doctor saw that something wasn't right. He immediately called for her father and Muskaan got her first prescription glasses. This only gave her partial relief. She still wasn't very comfortable with her sight as there was partial blindness in one eye. She didn't want to trouble her parents, as the family of four still had difficulty in making ends meet.

Then one day, her cousin pointed out that there were white particles in one eye. Her mother was scared; frightened for her little girl as she feared the worst. She got her tested at a private clinic and learned that Muskaan had been diagnosed with a cataract in her right eye. The family was distraught as they grappled with the fact that their daughter needed surgery. They couldn't figure out how to finance the operation as they were told that it would cost around \$350-400. Muskaan lost all of her confidence and wondered why she had this great misfortune.

When they learned about Seva's partner, Dr. Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital, it was truly like a miracle. One of the hospital's counsellors had seen their daughter and ensured them that she would be fine. He helped the family understand the requirements and how to prepare for the surgery. After a successful surgery, she still comes in for her regular follow up exams.

Muskaan wants to be a teacher when she grows up; it has been her childhood dream. Once, she thought it could never come true. Now she has many aspirations and dreams for the future and she also has a pair of healthy eyes to fulfil them.

8 COUNTRIES: LIVES CHANGED



GUATEMALA

In most communities in rural Guatemala, access to eye health is very low. The government does not provide the necessary supplies, facilities and medical personnel to serve the entire Guatemalan population. That is why institutions like Visualiza are dedicated to providing high quality eye care to all the poor communities of the country.

At Visualiza, a long-time Seva partner, the hospital trains many teachers year after year, in order to treat and reach a large number of children throughout Guatemala. Carlos, an outreach manager at Visualiza, helps make this training possible. “Every time we train a teacher, we empower them with our vision of giving back the light to people who want to see,” says Carlos. This transforms the lives of teachers as they become individuals of change for their communities, since they possess the necessary tools to be able to change the lives of their students and children in their community.

Thanks to trainers like Carlos Guatemalan children are able to access critical eye health knowledge and care in their own communities.

PRIORITIES LOOKING AHEAD

Seva and its partners remain committed to reaching more children and achieving our goal of screening 1 million children by December 2020. These are our priorities for the coming six months.

- Roll out cloud-based data collection system
- Reach at least 100,000 children with necessary eye care
- Establish 1 new pediatric partnership