

# Seva Foundation

Seva is a global eye care nonprofit whose mission is to transform lives and strengthen communities by restoring sight and preventing blindness. Seva works with underserved communities in more than 20 countries across Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

Their annual demonstrated impact includes:

- Reaching over 6.5 million individuals.
- Establishing 27 new vision centers serving underserved communities, providing over 3.6 million people with access to eye care.
- Screening 332,963 children for eye problems.
- Giving 59,000 kids glasses.
- Operating on 12,110 children to preserve or restore their vision.
- Training 4,719 individuals, ranging from doctors to community health promoters, in eye care.

Donations are **tax-deductible** in the country selected. See our [global tax-deductibility options](#).

DONATE NOW

By Card, Bank Transfer or Paypal

OTHER WAYS TO DONATE

By Check, ACH, Zelle, Crypto, etc.

**Key Strengths:** Scale, Durability

**Multidimensional Poverty Index Indicators:** Assets

**Other Key Outcomes:** Disease burden, Income increase

**Recent Expense Budget:** US\$11,000,000

**Year Founded:** 1978

5M	Provided eyecare services to over	The average cost of a cataract surgery is
people have restored vision thanks to Seva and their partners	50M individuals	US\$50

Other ways to donate

We recommend that gifts up to \$1,000 be made online by credit card. If you are giving more than \$1,000, please consider one of these alternatives.

CHECK

BANK TRANSFER

DONOR ADVISED FUND

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STOCKS OR SHARES

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CORPORATE MATCHING PROGRAM

## The problem: preventable blindness and vision impairment

According to the World Health Organization, more than 1 billion people worldwide are living with preventable vision impairment — something that disproportionately affects the global poor. [\[1\]](#) Nearly 90% of those affected live in the developing world, where a combination of malnutrition, poor water quality, lack of sanitation, and inadequate healthcare and health education conspires to spread diseases that damage vision and impede access to treatment. [\[2\]](#)

Visual impairment further entrenches people in poverty and can be deadly for sufferers: a high proportion of blind children die within a few years of losing sight, either from the underlying disease or due to the inability of their impoverished families to care for them. [\[3\]](#)

“More than 1 billion people worldwide are living with vision impairment because they do not get the care they need for conditions like short and farsightedness, glaucoma, and cataract.”

— **WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION**

## The solution: low-cost cataract surgeries and vision procedures

About 90% of the world’s visual impairment could be prevented or cured — in many cases through inexpensive medication or surgery. [\[4\]](#) Take cataracts for example: they are one of the leading causes of blindness globally, and restorative surgery costs only around \$50 in the developing world. [\[5\]](#)[\[6\]](#) It’s one of the most cost-effective of all public health interventions. [\[7\]](#)

## How Seva works

Seva's vision is a world free of avoidable blindness. They partner with existing local programs and institutions through The Global Sight Initiative (GSI) to provide a range of vision care and blindness prevention procedures. In addition to community outreach and education programs focused on nutrition, hygiene, eye injury prevention, and awareness of local eye care services, Seva also provides free or low-cost eye exams, glasses, medical treatment, and surgery to those who cannot afford to pay the full cost of procedures.



GSI, Seva's partnership program, enables doctors, paraprofessionals, and hospital staff worldwide to provide vision care services that their communities need — as opposed to relying on volunteer doctors from other countries. “Mentor” institutions provide training and consultancy services to “mentee” hospitals around the world to foster effective and efficient management systems and equip local staff with the tools they need to provide comprehensive care.

## What makes Seva so effective

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### Cost-effectiveness

Cataract surgery costs as little as US\$50 in developing countries. [8] Seva also helped launch a manufacturer of quality intraocular lenses that cost only US\$5 (compared to US\$100–150 typical market price). [9]

## Scalability

In 2021-2022 alone, Seva provided eye care services to over 3.5 million people of which over 50% are women, who traditionally lack access. Seva also trained 136 Doctors, 652 Ophthalmic support staff and 2,725 Community Health Promoters.

## Access to remote communities

Seva establishes vision centers in remote areas, and supports mobile teams of doctors and staff to provide education, screening, and surgeries to those unable to travel to established medical facilities.

## Sustainability

Through GSI, mentor hospitals partner with mentee hospitals to foster effective and efficient management systems and equip local staff to provide comprehensive care in their communities.

## Technology

Technology investments increase patient access to care and create more sustainable, efficient systems for care delivery. This includes leveraging tele-ophthalmology to streamline hospital flow, multiply the efforts of in-demand eye care specialists, and help eye care programs serve the hard-to-reach communities. Seva is exploring how new and emerging technologies can assist their work ranging from compact, portable camera systems for remote screening of patients to reducing the cost of common eye care medications.

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## Seva's accountability

Seva makes all annual reports available on their website. [\[10\]](#) They've also been rigorously vetted by Focusing Philanthropy, which awarded them grant money to fund vital surgeries and vision work in the developing world. [\[11\]](#)

## Recognition for Seva

In 2015, Seva received the prestigious Champalimaud Award for its contribution to eliminating preventable and treatable blindness around the world. [\[12\]](#)

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## SOURCES

All photos and videos courtesy of Seva

[1] World Health Organization, [WHO launches first World report on vision](#)

[2] International Council of Ophthalmology,  
[Latest Projections on Global Blindness and Low Vision Published](#)

[3] World Health Organization bulletin,  
[Childhood blindness in the context of VISION 2020—the right to sight.](#)

[4] World Health Organization, [WHO launches first World report on vision](#)

[5] World Health Organization, [World report on vision](#)

[6–8] GiveWell intervention report, [Cataract Surgery](#)

[9] Aurolab, [Genesis & Supporters](#)

[10] [Seva website](#)

[11] Focusing Philanthropy, [Transforming lives through site-restoring surgery](#)

[12] [Seva website](#)

[13] International Council of Ophthalmology,  
[Latest Projections on Global Blindness and Low Vision Published](#)

[14] Survey of Ophthalmology,  
[Interventions to improve functioning, participation, and quality of life in children with visual impairment: a systematic review](#)

[15] IAPB Vision Atlas, [GBVI – Global Disaggregation of Numbers for Gender and Age](#)