



## Soor Aur Saptak



**Donor Report  
July 2019 – June 2020**

# Program Goal

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In 2018, Seva and its donors came together and committed to reaching 1 million children around the world with eye care services by 2020. As of 30 June 2020, we have screened 1,075,976 children toward our target of 1 million. We're thrilled that thanks in part to our collaboration with Soor Aur Saptak, we achieved our goal!

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 a good future - 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 professional activities needs a clear vision.

Thanks to Seva's partners like Soor Aur Saptak, more children will have these opportunities. Through our commitment, children receive an eye screening and those who need additional eye care – such as a pair of glasses or eye surgery –receive it too.

The total amount of funds raised through the Soor Aur Saptak event in Portland, in February 2019, was \$50,964. Of this, \$44,862 supported the pediatric program from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. The remaining amount, \$6,100, will be added to the funds raised and targeted for the pediatric eye care program during this fiscal year (July 1, 2020- June 30, 2021).

## **Cover Photo Caption**

Supriya (7 years) and Siddhant (4 years) after receiving eyeglasses at Seva's partner eye hospital HV Desai. During a school screening program, both brother and sister were diagnosed with significant refractive error. Their parents were shocked to learn their children suffered vision problems as they never complained or shared any eye-related issues before. This led their parents to learn about eye health, factors contributing to vision impairment, and precautions they could take to care for their children's vision.

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## Where We Work

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



- Maharashtra
- New Delhi
- West Bengal

# Program Impact

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**101,760 children screened**  
(52,253 girls and 49,507 boys)



**240 surgeries**  
(121 girls and 119 boys)



**3,731 glasses**  
(1,894 girls and 1,837)



**3 partners**

# Impact of COVID19

The pandemic hit Seva partner hospitals at multiple levels, and the child screening program was one of the most affected. On 24th March 2020, the Government of India ordered a nationwide lockdown, initially for 21 days. Since then, the lockdown is in place in some form or another around the country. Under the lockdown, all schools are closed and public gatherings are prohibited, impacting all project locations. These local and national restrictions resulted in the temporary cessation of the child screening program. Ensuring the safety of children and staff is the top priority for Seva.

At this point, we do not foresee a date for resuming school screenings. That will be dependent on the government's requirements and restrictions. This will impact the program service delivery, and we don't know what that means.

During the shutdown, Seva and partner hospitals are using this time to prepare for safe delivery of eye care for children when services are resumed. We continue to explore options that will ensure safe pediatric eye care exams, including a pilot project for door-to-door screening at one project location. Under this intervention, a team of trained staff from Seva partner hospitals will go to the target area and screen children and family members. This is one possible solution from many. Always, Seva will work with its Medical Director and quality team to ensure adherence to all precautions.

As we learn of important updates impacting service delivery, we will keep you informed.

## Program Reach

FY19-20

	SAS Funds	Ped Funds Overall	% of Peds Effort Funded by SAS
<b>HVD</b>	\$24,862.50	\$49,725	50%
<b>SCEH</b>	\$20,000	\$97,920	20.4%

NOTE: Funding sent to VMANN in FY18-19 was rolled over and used in FY19-20

	HVD		SCEH		VMANN		TOTAL
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	
<b>Children Screened</b>	16,885	15,347	22,181	22,403	13,187	11,757	<b>101,760</b>
<b>Surgeries Provided</b>	30	44	65	54	26	21	<b>240</b>
<b>Glasses Provided</b>	350	328	1174	1137	370	372	<b>3731</b>

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## Priorities Looking Ahead

Despite the setbacks of COVID-19 and the longer-term impact it has on children and their ability to access eye care, Seva and its partners remain committed to reaching more children, beyond our achieved goal of screening 1 million children by 2020. In collaboration with Soor Aur Saptak, we will continue to reach children in India in critical need of eye care for the coming year. Thanks to your ongoing support, we are confident we will reach our goal to provide necessary eye care services to children in India and around the world.

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## Lives Changed

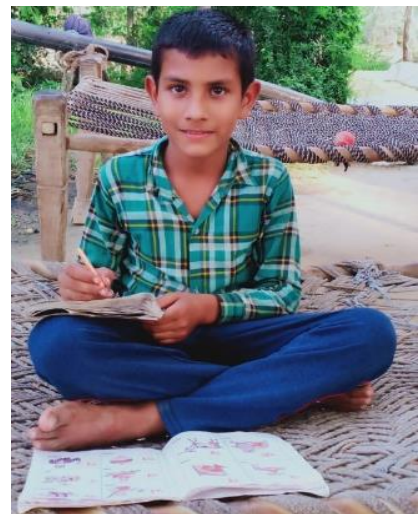
The following stories highlight the impact these efforts have made in the lives of the children, their families and communities.

### **Prashant, Uttar Pradesh**

Life can be fierce for a child with strabismus or “squint.” Prashant, a 12-year old, was realizing it slowly. He was picked on in school, as well as in his neighborhood. The poor child became withdrawn and shy.

Devpal, Prashant’s father, had a huge weight on his shoulders. With a small farm yielding approximately \$1000 to \$1200 annually, he had to provide for his wife and six children. The fact that their only son had a squint was both an emotional burden and a social stigma for Devpal and his wife.

Dr. Shroff’s Charity Eye Hospital and Seva Foundation have worked in Mathura District since 2018, addressing the problem of uncorrected refractive errors among children. Like many such opportunistic screening activities, the team organized a screening camp at Ramji Lal Junior High School on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2019, which happens to be Prashant’s school.





The screening team suspected squint in Prashant's left eye and recommended him to visit the main hospital. Subsequently, the team's counselor reached out to Prashant's parents and advised them to bring their child to see the Pediatric Ophthalmologist at the hospital. There it was explained that surgery was the only option.

Illiterate and then having to decide on surgery for a small child of 12 years is not an easy task. Even if the cost of the operation was covered, Prashant was his only son. The team at the partner hospital knew it was a big decision for the family. They reached out to all possible influencers like the school authorities, village headmen, and postman to encourage the parents. In Prashant's case, the team also reached out to local influencers, and finally, Devpal agreed for his son to have surgery. The operation took place at the end of September 2019.

Illiterate and then having to decide on surgery for a small child of 12 years is

Eight months later, the squint has entirely gone from Prashant's eye. The shy and withdrawn child now smiles freely and plays with his friends. And yes, Devpal and his wife no longer feel ashamed in front of relatives and neighbors.

### **Jyoti, Uttar Pradesh**

Jyoti, a six-year-old girl, was suffering from strabismus, commonly called "squint," in both eyes. She suffered from squint for two years. She and her family live in a small village in the Mathura district in Uttar Pradesh. Her father, Rahul, works as a farmer-laborer, barely earning \$2/day. With this meager income, he must care for his family of five. He has three children, and Jyoti is the second child.



One day, Jyoti fell down the stairs while playing, severely injured her head, and damaged her eyes. The injury left her with squint in both eyes. Her father felt that her squint could be treated and took Jyoti to a private hospital. The doctors confirmed that they could rectify her condition with surgery. The procedure's cost was entirely beyond their means, and her parents faced the difficult decision not to move forward with the operation.

Fortunately, a school screening camp was organized at her school by Dr. Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital, at Naujheel, Mathura, in December 2019. At the camp, they diagnosed her condition and referred her for surgery. When her parents learned that the operation to correct her eyes would be free, they were ecstatic. On 28th January, she visited the pediatric eye OPD with her parents. After undergoing counseling, they scheduled the surgery to correct her squint for 27th February 2020. After the procedure, Jyoti was all smiles.

A month following her surgery, the squint was no longer present. Jyoti continues to smile, and her father is happy, too, because his hope became a reality: his daughter's vision is restored. Mr. Rahul is thankful to SCEH and says that without SCEH's support, this surgery would have been a mere dream for him and his daughter Jyoti.

### **Phalguni, Maharashtra**

Phalguni Sawant (8 years) was screened during a Seva Foundation supported school screening program at one of the Municipal Corporation schools in Pune, Maharashtra, India. The screening team referred Phalguni to HV Desai Eye Hospital for further evaluation.

Phalguni's parents were surprised and worried to learn of her vision problem. Phalguni sometimes complained about the blurry screen while watching TV and reading boards at the shops. She sometimes experienced watering from the eyes, mostly after watching TV or reading a book for long periods. But her parents attributed it to something else. They used to scold Phalguni for watching too much TV.

At HV Desai Eye Hospital, Phalguni's eyes were checked thoroughly by the pediatric orthoptist and ophthalmologist. They diagnosed her with a significant refractive error with astigmatism.

Phalguni's parents were grateful for the screening team and doctors at the hospital, who identified and treated their daughter's eye problem. They promised that they would bring Phalguni in for her yearly eye checkup and assured them that she would regularly wear her spectacles. Phalguni was happy as she was able to see all the distant things, as well as letters on the calendars and boards. She promised to wear the glasses daily and come for regular eye checkups.

