



SOOR AUR SAPTAK
SUPPORT FOR PEDIATRIC EYE CARE
ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 2020 – JUNE 2021

PROGRAM GOAL

After achieving our milestone of screening 1 million children around the world with eye care services by 2020, COVID-19 has adversely impacted all domains of our life in India with eye care being no exception. This has pushed Seva to be agile and innovative in providing eye care while ensuring the health and safety of staff working on the ground. This last year, we piloted new models of providing care, improved program strategy and adopted new interventions, to make sure we are reaching children, even if they can't attend school or go outside of their home.

During the past year, thanks in part to our collaboration with Soor Aur Saptak, we added two new geographic areas while implementing the new model of care across India to ensure that eye care reaches children.

Around the world, more than 90 million children and adolescents live with some form of visual impairment. 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 eventually, professional activities requires clear vision. The 2020 Lancet Global Health Commission on Global Eye Health reveals that educational performance is linked to vision. Children with vision impairment have poorer educational outcomes and are more likely to be excluded from schools (and less likely to attend). The evidence shows that providing glasses to children improves their educational performance. This supports Seva's long-standing efforts to ensure access to eye care for children.

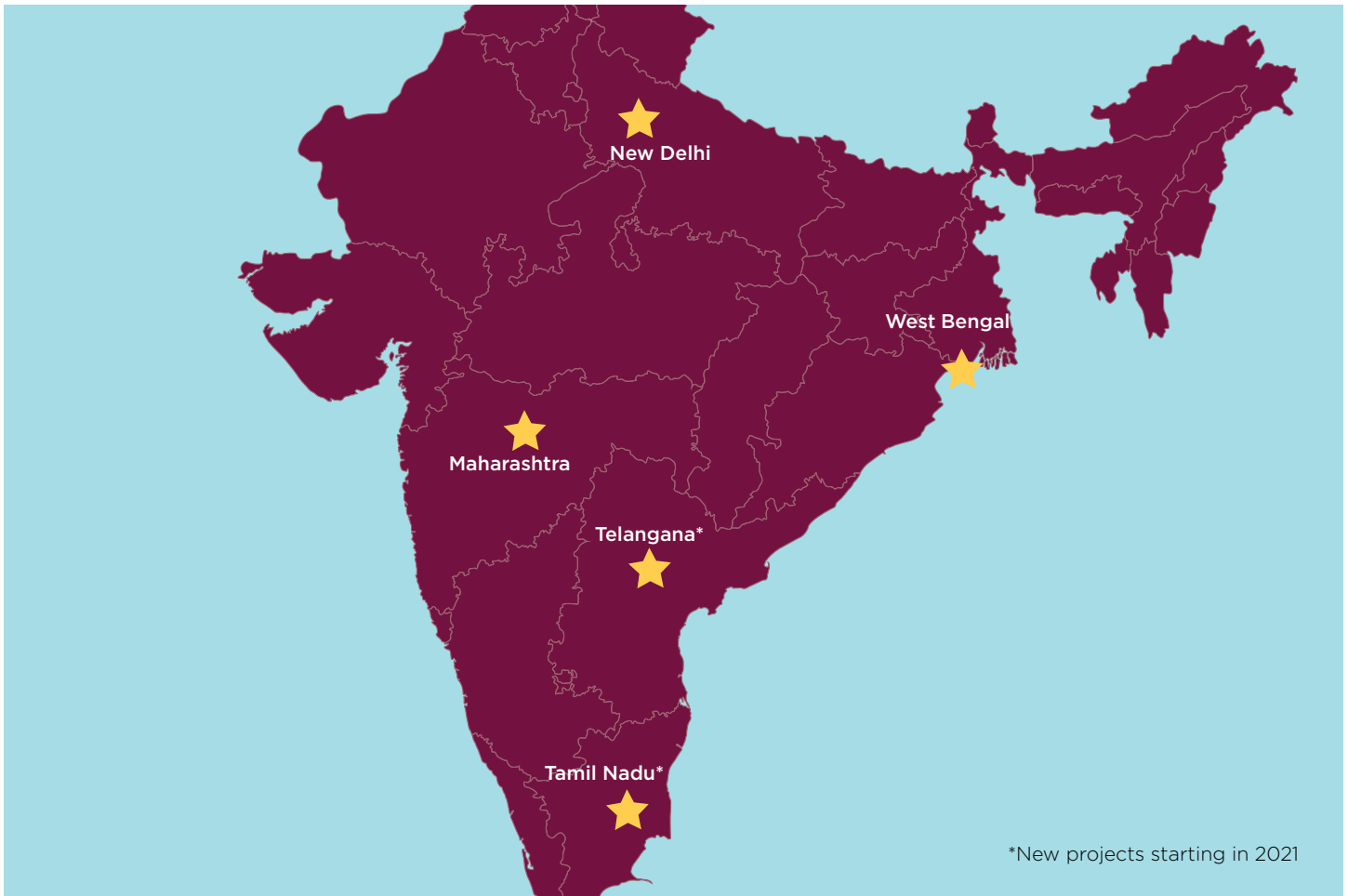
Thanks to Seva's partners like Soor Aur Saptak, more children will have these opportunities. Through our commitment, children receive an eye screening and those who need additional eye care - such as a pair of glasses or eye surgery - will receive them too.

Kavya (4 years), the only child in the family, has lived with blurred vision in her right eye since birth. Unable to live with her parents due to family conditions, she had difficulties in seeing while staying with her grandparents. During a screening initiative, she was advised for membranectomy surgery. Considering the grandparents financial situation, she was provided treatment at a partner hospital without charge. Today her condition is much improved.

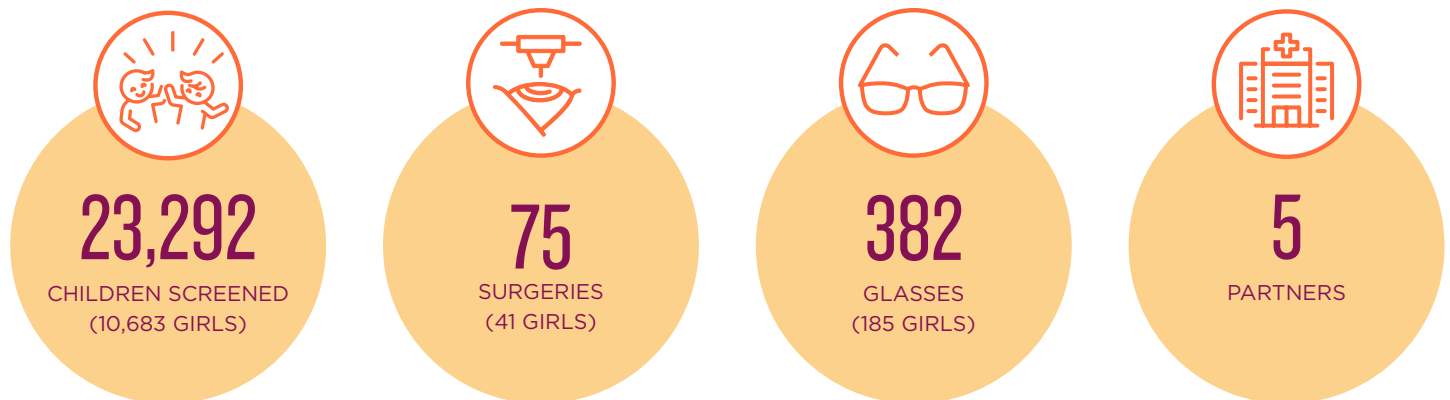
In the last three years, Seva established 47 VCs in India, bringing access to eye care to 4.1 million people. More importantly and in light of COVID learnings, we will establish 25 VCs, resulting in providing access to an additional 1.5 million people eyecare.

WHERE WE WORK

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



PROGRAM IMPACT





IMPACT OF COVID19

The pandemic hit Seva partner hospitals at multiple levels and the child screening program was one of the most affected. Since the pandemic began, the national and state governments have ordered a series of lockdowns. This impacted all project locations. Due to local and national restrictions in place, the child screening program at schools was paused. All schools were closed for more than a year. Beginning in August, local governments began exploring the idea of gradually opening schools, but this remains limited. In the later part of 2021, it is expected that some of the schools may start staggering the return of students, with the senior classes starting first. The return of younger children remains uncertain still. Ensuring the safety of children and staff is the top priority for Seva. Furthermore, the partners are not sure, even if the schools do open, whether eye screening will be allowed inside the school in the near term due to concerns around safety and social distancing protocols.

PROGRAM REACH

FY20-21

COUNTRY	SAS FUNDS	PED FUNDS OVERALL	% OF PEDS EFFORT FUNDED BY SAS
AECS	\$57,476.98	\$100,000	57%

NOTE: Funding sent to HVD & VMANN in FY19-20 was also used in FY20-21.

	AECS		SCEH		VMANN		TOTALS
	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	
CHILDREN SCREENED	662	829	10,683	12,609	1,227	1,900	27,910
SURGERIES PROVIDED	0	0	25	31	35	46	137
GLASSES PROVIDED	0	0	78	80	136	175	469

PRIORITIES LOOKING AHEAD

During the pandemic, Seva and partner hospitals showed great agility and innovation to continue providing for the safe delivery of eye care to children. We started piloting these models to reach children in the latter half of 2020, which were temporarily halted when the second wave of COVID-19 hit (March to June 2021).

- 1 Door-to-Door screening** for children in northern India started when children were not allowed to leave their homes. The project team provided eye screening and primary examination at the doorstep of homes, while keeping to national and WHO safety measures. If the child is found to have URE (uncorrected refractive error) and/or surgical needs, the child and the family are counseled and referred to the base hospital/vision center for appropriate treatment. In addition to children, the initiative provided eye care screening to 28,758 adults, 283 glasses and 258 surgeries were completed.
- 2 The Sibling Screening Strategies** were invented for providing systematic pediatric eye care in Tamil Nadu. In a pilot study (unpublished data) conducted at a partner hospital in Tamil Nadu, they found 58.1% of patients' siblings had myopia, requiring spectacle correction, compared to the 10% of refractive error diagnosed during their school screening camp. Accordingly, an initiative was launched in the last quarter of FY 2020-21. It has identified 170 siblings requiring refraction correction, from a total of 1,491 children who visited the hospital and primary eye care centers in June 2021.
- 3** In another initiative in Telangana, “home-based” eye care is being explored, prioritizing children and the elderly to be visited by a team comprised of an optometrist/ vision technician and a community eye health worker, stationed at rural secondary centers.

These are a few examples of how we are persistently working to provide care even in the most difficult situation in India. Regardless, Seva will work with its Medical Director and quality team to ensure all safety precautions are taken in providing care.

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. For the coming year, in collaboration with Soor Aur Saptak, we will continue to reach children in India in critical need of eye care. 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.

LIVES CHANGED

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



SHIVAM, UTTAR PRADESH

Shivam, 11-years-old, lost vision in his right eye for the last four years due to cataract. He lives with his family in a small village named Ram Nagla, of Mathura district in Uttar Pradesh. His father, Mr. Deepak Kumar, works as a laborer in a brick manufacturing factory and earns \$100/month. This barely supports his family of four. Shivam is the eldest of two children.



Four years ago, Shivam fell from a roof while playing. He was severely injured in the fall, which left both legs paralyzed, as well as his right eye injured. Seeing the plight of his own son, his father took him to many hospitals looking for the best treatment. Due to his poor financial situation, he couldn't afford to treat his son's paralysis. As days went by, neither Shivam nor his parents noticed the injury to his eye. Shivam's vision in his damaged eye gradually worsened. During the last year, his father noticed that his son had difficulty seeing and sought treatment for his vision loss. He took Shivam to a district government hospital. The doctors confirmed that his eye condition could be rectified with surgery. Unfortunately, general anesthesia was not available in the government hospital, and he had to return home without treatment.

Dr. Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital team met him during a door-to-door screening program in Naujheel in Dec 2020. The screening revealed his problem and the team recommended to his father that he take Shivam to the hospital for further examination and treatment. On December 3, 2020, Shivam and his father traveled to a Seva-sponsored vision center in Naujheel. After the examination, he was referred to the base hospital for a full examination. Two days later, they arrived at BHRC - Dr. Shroff's Eye Care Institute. He underwent a routine examination by the pediatric ophthalmologist and was diagnosed with traumatic cataract and scheduled for surgery. On January 14th, 2021, he had surgery to remove the cataract. His family is incredibly happy with the outcome of the surgery. This was all made possible because of Soor Aur Saptak's support.



BULBUL, UTTAR PRADESH

Bulbul is 13 years old and the second of four children. She is in 7th grade. She and her family live in a small village called Naujheel, of Mathura district in Uttar Pradesh. Their home is a small mud house. Her father, Mr. Devender, sells vegetables for a living and barely earns \$2 to \$3 a day. Bulbul's mother looks after the necessities of the family.

Bulbul suffered from squint in both eyes. About 6 years ago, Bulbul had a high-grade fever which seems to have weakened her eyes. Gradually, she developed squint. Her father took her to a private hospital in Delhi. He hoped to get his daughter quality care, but because of his poor financial situation, he could not afford to pay for the recommended treatment.

Dr. Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital's team met the family during a door-to-door screening program in Naujheel in April 2021. They diagnosed her condition and advised her father that he should take her to the hospital for further examination and treatment.

On 19th March 2021, they traveled to the primary eye center located at Naujheel. They examined her and referred her to the base hospital. On 23rd March she arrived with her father to Dr. Shroff's Eye Care Institute. Following another routine examination by the pediatric ophthalmologist, she was diagnosed with squint. Both eyes were operated on to correct her squint.

Before surgery, she was teased by her friends and relatives but now, she feels confident and once again plays with her friends.





KAVYA

Kavya (4 years), the only child in the family, has lived with blurred vision in her right eye since birth. Unable to live with her parents due to family conditions, she had difficulties in seeing while staying with her grandparents. During a screening initiative, she was advised for membranectomy surgery. Considering the grandparent's financial situation, she was provided treatment at a partner hospital without charge. Today her condition is much improved.