

# Nepal Fact Sheet

SEVA'S WORK AT A GLANCE: In country since 1978 | Partners: 21



## Country Overview

- » Nepal is a landlinked country in South Asia. Predominantly located in the Himalayas it also includes parts of the Indo-Gangetic Plain.
- » Size: 147,516 sq km (56,956 sq mi)
- » Population: 30.17 Million
- » 2019 Human Development Index Ranking: 147 of 189 countries

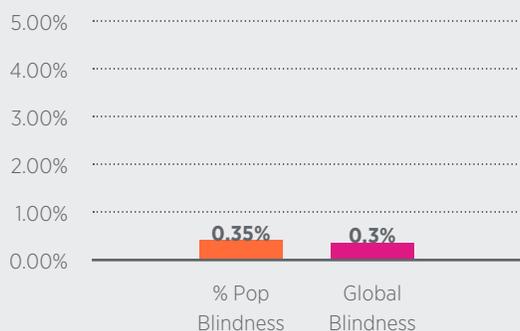
## Scope of Eye Care Needs

- » 0.35% of Nepal's population is blind (105,600 of 30.17M) » Compared to 0.15% in the United States.
- » Nepal has 0.3% of global blindness

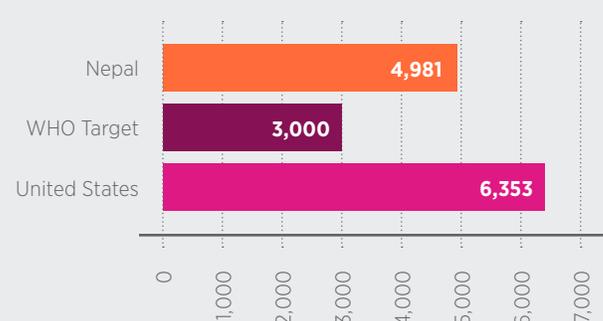
## Nationwide Eye Care Response

- » Nepal's CSR (Cataract Surgical Rate) was 4,981 surgeries per million in 2018 » compared to the US's CSR of 6,353
- » 11 Ophthalmologists per million people in Nepal (350 per 30.17M as of 2018 » US = 60 per million people).
- » 17 Optometrists per million people (520/30.17M)
- » 34 Allied Ophthalmic Personnel per million (1,025/30.17M)

### VISION NEEDS



### CATARACT SURGICAL RATE PER MILLION PEOPLE



### Context

Nepal has undergone tremendous transformation since moving out of agrarian isolation and opening its borders in the 1950s to neighboring India, and with it, the outside world. The country has since abolished its monarchy, lived through a decade of civil war, which ended in 2006 and created a multi-party parliamentary system. Following nearly half a century of political turmoil and enormous transition the region was hit with the destructive earthquake of 2015, killing thousands and destroying an already nominal infrastructure as well as rich heritage sites. Nepal's economy relies heavily on outside aid, foreign remittance and tourism, as it remains one of the poorest countries in the world.

More than 80% of the blindness in Nepal is either preventable or curable, however the vast majority of people in Nepal don't have access to quality, affordable eye care. This is greatly due to the inaccessibility of rugged terrain that separates 81%<sup>1</sup> of the Nepalese population living rurally.

Today, there are 350 ophthalmologists in a country of over 28 million, which equates to 7 for every million person. Seva has created a network of eye care providers through partnering with Nepal Netra Jyoti Sangh and its branches in 25 districts out of a total of 77 districts in the country. The services provided through this wide network target the most vulnerable populations including women, children and hard to access rural communities. Seva is providing its services through 54 Vision Centers across 6 of Nepal's 7 provinces.

Seva supports continuing medical education, professional training, and provides surgical equipment and supplies, all of which serve to increase the quality of patient care. By equipping our partners with the tools they need to provide quality, efficient services, Seva builds locally run eye care programs that are self-sustaining within 5-10 years of establishment. Additionally about 370,000 eye examinations and nearly 30,000 eye surgeries are performed annually in Nepal through Seva and local partners, thanks to the support from TOMS, Focusing Philanthropy and other donors.

By assessing Nepal's **Burden of Blindness**, we are able to reveal how blindness or moderate to severe visual impairment (MSVI) imposes a challenge to this population. **Nepal has 0.3% of global blindness**, for a country with just over 30 million, this is a fairly manageable rate. Compared to the US, with a population of over 300 million and 0.35% of global blindness, we can however still see the relative disproportion.

### Seva's Approach in Nepal

Seva supports eye care services in the four main geographical areas of Nepal:

**The Lumbini Zone** (the central western development region) has a total of eleven eye care facilities including one center of excellence, two secondary eye care hospitals, two surgical centers, two District Eye Care Centers and five Vision Centers (VCs).

**The Narayani Zone**, located in the central south of Nepal with five districts, has a network of three eye hospitals with VCs in each district. Bharatpur Eye Hospital has one Secondary Eye Hospital in Thori and Parsa and eight VCs. Gaur Eye Hospital has three VCs. Kedia Eye Hospital has five VCs.

**The Eastern Region** consists of five eye care facilities supported by Seva Nepal.

Seva works closely with Geta Eye Hospital located in the Kailali district to provide eye care services in six remote districts throughout the **Far Western Region**. This area does not have active and organized local NNJS chapters (Nepal Netra Jyoti Sangh — National Society for Comprehensive Eye Care) to help gather local resources and facilitate delivery of eye care services. Therefore, Seva's support through outreach activities in collaboration with Geta Eye Hospital has been critical in providing the necessary eye care services to this particularly disenfranchised population.

Seva's approach to addressing eye health needs in Nepal prioritize three key strategies; **Access** to universal eye care, building **Capacity** of personnel and infrastructure as well as **Evidence**-based interventions and advocacy.

**Primary eye care services** are provided through

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<sup>1</sup> Reported in 2016, according to the World Bank collection of development indicators.

## NEPAL FACT SHEET

Vision Centers (VCs) as well as through eye camp outreach, which offer exams, medical treatment, glasses, surgeries and transport. In 2016-17 63% of the patients seen at eye camps in Nepal were female, similarly 63% of all patients seen at hospitals or VCs were female or children.

Modern Technology for patient care is vital in supporting up to date practices implemented locally. By purchasing clinical equipment for partner hospitals, Seva and our partners ensure an increase in availability of quality services for the Nepali population. This year Seva will also support two hospitals to introduce teleconsultation linking its hospital with its remote VCs.

By focusing on Hospital Management Systems such as training, tracking and evaluations, hospitals and local communities alike are more equipped to build out their capacity and more effectively serve their populations. This year Eyexcel training was implemented and organized by the Seva Nepal staff with session delivered by local partners and invited faculty.

Seva with our partners, provide trainings for local doctors in ophthalmology residencies, Allied Ophthalmic personnel as well as teachers for school screenings. The quality of cataract surgeries, evaluation of

personnel and the effectiveness of service delivery are all tracked. Attendance at professional conferences and meetings allows our partners to share program findings with a broader community of specialists.

Finally, by tracking financial sustainability and cost recovery Seva can support maintaining and building up the capability of services to those in need.

### Impact of COVID-19 in Nepal

Nepal has one of the highest prevalence rates of COVID-19 infection in the region. On 24 March, the government of Nepal imposed a nationwide lockdown to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Eye hospitals subsequently shut down, except to provide emergency services. COVID-19 has most severely impacted the poorest communities. Livelihoods and health has been severely affected. As the country re-opens, Seva's partners are expecting to see a backlog of patients who were not able to come during the lockdown periods. To support hospital partners, Seva worked with hospital staff to develop safety protocols, organized a poster competition to educate community members about how to prevent COVID-19, and provided funds to procure necessary protective equipment for their staff.

#### IMPACT (FY 2019-2020)\*

<b>368,932</b> People receiving services	<b>28,741</b> Cataract surgeries performed	<b>65,416</b> Children screened	<b>2,052</b> Children receiving surgery	<b>3,628</b> Children receiving glasses
<b>2</b> New PECVCs funded through Seva	<b>50,000</b> People who now have access to care	<b>3,700</b> People receiving services at VCs	<b>1</b> Eyexcels Completed	<b>8</b> Hospitals participating in Eyexcel
<b>13</b> People participating in Eyexcel	<b>35</b> Doctors trained	<b>49</b> AOPS trained	<b>16</b> Administrators trained	<b>379</b> Community Health Promoters trained

\* Numbers based on reports received.