

# Seva Eye Care Program: Guatemala

Supporting a regional resource for accessible eye care



**Avoidable Blindness:** Guatemala is one of the poorest nations in Latin America. Nearly 37% of the population lives on less than \$2 a day and roughly 15% lack access to health care. Because communities lack accessible eye care services, nearly 75% of the blind people in Guatemala suffer from preventable or curable causes.

***An estimated 80,000 of Guatemala's 12.7 million residents are blind from cataract, which can be cured with a cost-effective, 15-minute surgery.***

**Strategic Partnerships:** Seva is working with our local partner, Visualiza, to address the lack of quality, affordable eye care in Guatemala and to develop a full range of community ophthalmology services.

***With only 2% of the nation's ophthalmologists, Visualiza performs roughly 30% of all cataract surgeries in Guatemala.***

Seva provides direct support for Visualiza's clinical services and school screenings that help reduce avoidable blindness across Guatemala and restore sight to some of the country's most vulnerable populations, including women and children in rural communities. Seva is committed to augmenting Visualiza's service capacity with a focus on local staff development and management training. With Seva's ongoing support for skill-based training, Visualiza has become a resource to improve other eye care centers in Latin America.

**Sustainable Solutions:** Seva encourages Visualiza's hybrid model that serves both high paying clients and provides free or low cost services to poorer communities. Through this model, Visualiza is able to self-fund 90% of its program activities, therefore contributing to program sustainability. By equipping Visualiza with the tools and resources they need to provide quality, efficient care, Seva is helping to build locally-run and self-sustaining eye care centers across Guatemala.

Through Seva's partnership with TOMS One for One, Visualiza has been able to expand its free and subsidized eye care services and conduct more patient outreach and school screenings in Guatemala City and in the Petén's rural region of San Benito. These additional services will have a notable impact, as Visualiza is the only Guatemalan institution providing children with preventative screenings.



## **The Problem:**

- Nearly 80,000 Guatemalans are blind from cataract
- 15% of Guatemalans lack access to health care
- 75% of the blindness is curable or preventable

## **The Solution:**

*Sight-restoring cataract surgery can be performed in just 15 minutes for just \$50*

## **Seva's Goal:**

To build the service capacity of Visualiza's Community Ophthalmology centers and help create a regional resource for quality eye care.

## **Seva provides:**

- Funding for direct services
- Staff development and management training to improve efficiency and impact of Visualiza's clinics
- Skill-based training to generate a regional resource for accessible eye care

## **Partner Organization:**

Visualiza

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