



Seva at Work in India Creating Vision Centres

An estimated 21 million people in India have cataracts, and nine million are cataract blind. Although cataract is reversible, millions remain blind due to a lack of accessible eye care.

In India, Seva works to restore sight in conjunction with the Aravind Eye Care System which has saved millions of people in India from debilitating blindness. In the past year, Aravind provided outpatient care to approximately 2.4 million patients and performed more than 280,000 surgeries. Thanks in part to Aravind's efforts; the estimated number of blind people in India has decreased by 25% since 1990.

Aravind provides high-quality, affordable, community-oriented eye care within a sustainable financial structure. Fees from the 1/3 of patients who can afford to pay subsidize services for the other 2/3 of patients who are served free of charge.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Vision Centres provide primary eye care to the most vulnerable populations and can treat approximately 90% of all eye conditions.

Centres are equipped with basic ophthalmic equipment and a computer with a digital camera and internet connectivity. Vision Centres are run by ophthalmic assistants who perform examinations and refractions, treat minor ailments, and prescribe medicines and glasses, if required. All the patients examined at the vision centre are consulted with the ophthalmologist at Aravind Eye Hospital. Patients who require surgery or more complex care are asked to come to the hospital.

Public health education and training programs are conducted by the centre including eye health education, training of school teachers and community volunteers in eye screening effectively linking the Vision Centre with the community.



SEVA'S PARTNER: Aravind Eye Care System

WHERE: based in Madurai, Tamil Nadu

FOUNDED: Dr. G. Venkataswamy in 1976

ARAVIND BACKGROUND: With Seva's support, Aravind has grown from 11 beds in a rented house to become the the largest and most productive eye care facility in the world, in terms of surgical volume and the number of patients treated. Aravind includes:

- 5 hospitals
- 3 managed hospitals
- Aurolab, a manufacturing facility for ophthalmic products
- international research foundation
- resource and training centre
- 3 Vision Centres and 10 more planned

BUDGET FOR A VISION CENTRE

Vision Centre set-up costs inc.

equipment and supplies:	\$3,500
Operating costs	\$9,000
Outreach program *	\$22,000
Program implementation	\$4,300
TOTAL	\$38,800

* screening, education & community training