

# DEVELOPMENT WITH DIGNITY

Dear Seva Canada Supporters,

Dignity, while universally perceived and recognized, manifests differently across cultures, through their social structures and beliefs.

To achieve development with dignity, Seva Canada began by learning from local partners what their population needed and what was a culturally appropriate means of meeting those needs.

The next, and overwhelmingly most important step in developing dignity, has been providing partners with the capacity to meet those population needs, at a level recognized for its excellence, and that is provided appropriately and equitably. Our unstated, but underlying mantra has always been: to make our partners leaders and ourselves unknown.

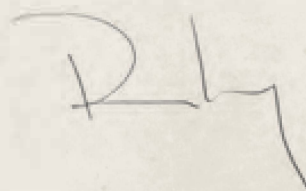
Development with dignity required the funding and expertise that Seva Canada provides. It required equipping hospitals, training personnel and funding programs and services. These were important steps in the journey but the real end was creating leadership in the institutions, financial autonomy, and equity in service delivery. From all of this comes dignity, when partners meet as colleagues and friends. These relationships are the ones that have endured for almost 40 years, so far, sometimes long after the need for Seva's funding has passed.

In an article in the Guardian, author Jonathan Glennie writes that: *"Dignity is a word that overturns traditional assumptions about north and south, developed and developing. While charity is bestowed by the haves to the have-nots, dignity does not work like that at all. If I fail to treat someone with dignity, it is me, not them, who is undignified."*



If we put dignity front and centre then we also need to stop using terms like 'developed' and 'developing' which are a hold-over from an era long past. As of July 1<sup>st</sup>, Seva Canada's mission statement was revised to read:

***"Seva Canada's mission is to restore sight and prevent blindness in low- and middle-income countries."***



**Penny Lyons**, Executive Director



# HOW ARE COUNTRIES CLASSIFIED BY INCOME GROUPINGS?

To continue to provide development with dignity, as mentioned in our cover story, Seva Canada's mission statement has changed to "Seva Canada's mission is to restore sight and prevent blindness in low- and middle-income countries."

## What are low- and middle-income countries?

The classifications are based on how the World Bank assigns the world's economies into four income groups – low, lower-middle, upper-middle and high-income countries. Economies are divided among income groups according to their gross national income (GNI) per capita in US dollars on July 1<sup>st</sup> every year, calculated using the World Bank Atlas method.

The Atlas method uses the Atlas conversion factor instead of simple exchange rates. The purpose of the Atlas conversion factor is to reduce the impact of exchange rate fluctuations in the cross-country comparison of national incomes.

The Atlas conversion factor for any year is the average of a country's exchange rate for that year and its exchange rates for the two preceding years, adjusted for the difference between

the rate of inflation in the country and international inflation; the objective of the adjustment is to reduce any changes to the exchange rate caused by inflation.

For the current 2022 fiscal year, the four income groups are defined as follows:

- **low-income economies** (27 countries) are defined as those with a GNI per capita of \$1,045 or less in 2020;
- **lower middle-income economies** (55 countries) are those with a GNI per capita between \$1,046 and \$4,095;
- **upper middle-income economies** (55 countries) are those with a GNI per capita between \$4,096 and \$12,695;
- **high-income economies** (80 countries) are those with a GNI per capita of \$12,696 or more.

To learn more visit <https://bit.ly/WorldBankClassification>

MAXIMIZE YOUR IMPACT THIS  
HOLIDAY SEASON WITH A

# GIFT OF SECURITIES



## Donate securities to Seva and reap significant tax benefits!

Under Canadian tax law, when you sell your appreciated securities you pay capital gains tax on an amount equal to one-half of their increase in value. But, if you donate your securities to a registered charity, you don't pay any capital gains tax at all! In addition, you will receive a tax receipt for the full market value of the securities. Best of all, you will be restoring sight and preventing blindness for children, women and men in low- and middle-income countries.

For more information, contact **Paul** at 1-877-460-6622 or email [fundraising@seva.ca](mailto:fundraising@seva.ca)



## UPCOMING EVENTS

SEVA CANADA'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, NOVEMBER 5, 2021

# JOIN US TO CELEBRATE THE ACHIEVEMENTS YOU MADE POSSIBLE!

It's been quite an eye opening year! The past year brought many challenges but it also brought many successes, all thanks to your generosity.

We are optimistic that we will be able to meet in person on November 5<sup>th</sup> at VanDusen Botanical Garden in Vancouver for our Annual General Meeting (AGM). However, if that isn't possible due to COVID restrictions, we will carry on with a Zoom AGM.

As we get closer to the date, we will update you with the night's details. **If you already receive emails from us, you are all set, however, if you don't currently get Seva emails be sure to sign up at <https://bit.ly/SevaEmails>**

## AGM EVENT DETAILS

**Date:** Friday, November 5, 2021

**Time:** 7pm PST

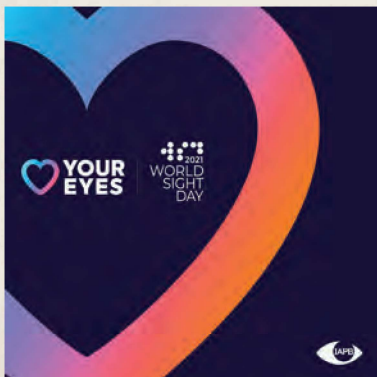
**Location (TBC):** BMO Great Hall, VanDusen Botanical Garden, 5151 Oak Street  
Vancouver BC V6M 4H1

*Free parking is available, entrance is off 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue, just west of Oak Street*

**Please note:** Everyone is welcome to attend the AGM, however, to be considered a member of Seva Canada Society and eligible to vote at our AGM, a person must have donated a minimum of \$20 between November 7, 2020 and November 1, 2021.

Any member may be nominated to the Board of Directors by submitting a letter signed by a nominator and a seconder, both of whom must be members in good standing of Seva Canada Society. Letters can be sent to the Seva Canada office to the attention of the Chair of the Governance and Nominating Committee.

# LOVE YOUR EYES! WORLD SIGHT DAY, OCTOBER 14, 2021



World Sight Day, the annual day of awareness focusing global attention on blindness and vision impairment, will be held on **October 14, 2021**. This year's global theme is #LoveYourEyes because everyone counts.

Nearly everyone on the planet will experience an eye health issue in their lifetime but more than a billion people worldwide do not have access to eye care services.

The International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) and the global eye care community is undertaking a worldwide challenge to get over 1 million people to pledge to have a sight test and care for their eyes. **Join us in getting an eye exam if you can and/or encouraging others to do the same. Make your pledge to get an eye exam at <https://bit.ly/3iC1DDF>**

Keep an eye on your email inbox for more information on World Sight Day. If you don't currently get our email updates, just visit <https://bit.ly/SevaEmails> to sign up!

# RESEARCH DIGNITY AND DEVELOPMENT



PRIYA ADHISESHAN, SEVA RESEARCH PARTNER, SHARING RESULTS WITH OUR MALAGASY PARTNERS

Research dignity, meaning mutual respect among health researchers, while common in higher-income countries, remains rare between those settings and low- and middle-income countries. This reflects the almost universal dominance of research agendas and products by academics situated in more high-income countries, even when the research occurs in poorer settings.

Building independent research capacity in low- and middle-income countries, arguably the most important and challenging dimension of international development, is the only road to achieving mutual respect, and with it the confidence of local individuals to define the problems and find the solutions.

Seva Canada and its partner the Kilimanjaro Centre for Community Ophthalmology (KCCO), perhaps more than any other non-governmental eye care organizations, have invested in very long-term programs to build research capacity one person at a time, and one institution at a time, both through funding research training, and also through mentoring and supervising.

Nothing is more rewarding to us, or as important to these individuals and institutions, than our partners asking for our help to study their program problems and utilize their research findings.

Along with research dignity comes a level of gratitude seldom seen and profoundly treasured.

## COVID'S EFFECT ON EYE CARE DELIVERY



Since March 2020, most programs have examined fewer patients and performed fewer surgeries than normal, ranging from 20 to 50%. There have been few community outreach activities, in the form of screening and diagnostic 'camps' although hospitals still supported Community Eye Care Centres in their catchment areas (Community Eye Care Centres are permanent facilities providing remote communities with year-round access to basic eye care covering 90% of all eye conditions and timely referrals to hospitals when surgery is needed).

Almost all institutions maintained their clinical and administrative staff, although usually in diminished or part-time roles.

Training of medical personnel continued, where possible,

and some eye care personnel in general hospitals assisted with care of COVID patients.

We do not anticipate the eye programs returning to full strength in 2021. This reduces costs associated with surgery, while program costs such as salaries remain almost the same. Any residual funds will be provided to programs as service levels return to normal and training programs resume. We do, however, expect that across all programs, service costs will increase by approximately 20% to provide care safely with COVID restrictions, which generally result in slower patient flow that lowers productivity.

**As the COVID landscape evolves, our partners will continue to find safe and effective ways to provide eye care to those in need.**



# WHAT FEELS LIKE THE END IS OFTEN THE BEGINNING



KEMUEL WITH HIS FATHER AND YOUNGER BROTHER

**"This child was saved by people; I can't thank them enough. My wife and I were so desperate and did not know what to do until we met the Community Eye Centre's staff, godsend indeed!" - Kemuel's father**

When Kemuel was born in Cibitoke, Burundi, his parents reveled in the excitement of their firstborn child. The elation began to fade when a family friend, a doctor, came to visit the

baby. He noticed that Kemuel could not see and suspected cataracts. He encouraged the family to take Kemuel to the Community Eye Centre to have his eyes examined. The first-time parents were scared and anxious – how would they raise a child who is blind?

At the Community Eye Centre, the eye care team confirmed that Kemuel had congenital bilateral cataracts and he was scheduled for surgery at the Eye Hospital. His parents didn't believe that their beloved son would ever be able to see but followed the doctor's instructions out of respect. At 6 months old, Kemuel underwent his first cataract surgery and was given a pair of glasses.

"At 12 months old, I was astonished to see that he could move his eyes when I placed my hands in front of his face. I came to realize that he was starting to progress the way that most children do," said his mother with tears of joy running down her cheeks.

**"Now I believe that he can aspire to a brighter future. He is going to go to school and have good grades just like other children!" said Kemuel's father.**

Today, Kemuel is a rambunctious 7-year-old who sees the ophthalmologist twice a year for follow-up visits and to update his prescription glasses. He loves going to school to learn and play with his friends, and just be a regular kid.

## SEVA CANADA WORD JUMBLE — CAN YOU SEE ALL THE WORDS?

**Find the word in the puzzle.**

Words can go in any direction.

Words can share letters as they cross over each other.

blindness  
education  
eyes  
glasses  
nurse  
prevention  
see  
sight  
training  
visual

cataract  
equity  
fieldworker  
glaucoma  
outreach  
research  
seva  
surgeon  
treat

cure  
eye care  
give  
medicine  
partners  
screening  
Seva Canada  
trachoma  
vision

T	M	V	A	E	K	S	V	E	E	S	T	D	K	P
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A	G	Y	S	I	I	B	O	H	R	R	R	T	R	A
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N	R	E	K	R	O	W	D	L	E	I	F	I	J	I
T	T	E	Y	E	C	A	R	E	S	E	A	R	C	H



# CLEARLY IS BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS TO CLEAR VISION

Clearly, Canada's leading online eyewear retailer, believes that everyone deserves the right to sight. As part of their mission to eradicate poor vision, Clearly is dedicated to making eyewear affordable, eye health accessible, and raising awareness about the importance of good vision.

Clearly is proud to partner with Seva Canada to provide the power of sight to people in low- and middle-income countries. In 2019, Clearly funded teacher-training sessions in Banteay Meanchey, Cambodia, where teachers were taught to test their student's visual acuity to identify children with eye problems. 52 teachers (19 women) from 18 high schools screened 2,400 children. Those children who needed glasses or further care were referred to the the Eye Unit in the Mongkol Borei Provincial Hospital in Banteay Meanchey.

Most recently, Clearly supported our Mother's Day campaign to provide cataract surgeries to mothers and children in low-income countries. This partnership will provide sight-restoring cataract surgeries to 135 women and 45 children this year.

***We spoke with Dr. Justin Asgarpour, an optometrist and Clearly's Chief Vision and Mission Officer, to learn more about Clearly and its mission.***

**Seva: What do you want readers to know about Clearly that they might be surprised to hear?**

**Justin:** Clearly is truly a mission-led organization and we are doing our part to equip Canadians and people around the world with proper vision.

**Seva: Tell us about Clearly's mission.**

**Justin:** Our mission is to make eye care accessible, affordable, and to create awareness about eye health. 2.5 billion people around the world don't have access to eye care. Clearly addresses this through partnerships with organizations like Seva Canada and with our national and global programs where we donate glasses to those in need. For example, with Clearly's *Buy One, Give One* program, every pair of glasses purchased results in a pair being donated to someone in need.

In Canada, 25% of children have vision corrective needs but less than 14% of children by the age of 6 have had an eye exam. Since 80% of learning is processed through vision, there's a tremendous need for children to see properly. Through our in-store *Free Glasses for Kids* program, Clearly offers glasses to kids to help them reach their full potential and succeed in school. Approximately 4,000 pairs of glasses have been distributed so far to help children see, 65-70% of those children are wearing glasses for the first time.

**Seva: "Love Your Eyes" is this year's theme for World Sight Day on October 14<sup>th</sup>. How does Clearly encourage Canadians to get their eyes examined?**

**Justin:** There are 2.2 million Canadians who do not have proper vision care. 1 out of 7 Canadians have a condition that could lead to permanent vision loss; 70% of that vision loss is preventable if the individual has proper treatment by a doctor.

Clearly is helping to ensure all Canadians have access to proper eye care. We want all Canadians to see their optometrists to ensure their vision is corrected and their eyes are healthy. We try to facilitate this through our retail locations and community programs. For example, our *Clearly for Community* mobile vision centres visit underserved areas and provides glasses to Canadians in need.

For more information on Clearly visit [clearly.ca](https://clearly.ca)

**Thank you Clearly for all you do to provide those in need with the gift of sight!**

clearly™



# RUPINDER SINGH PARHAR: HELPING POWER BRIGHTER FUTURES WITH THE GIFT OF SIGHT

Rupinder Singh Parhar has been a major supporter of Seva Canada since 2008. He is a graduate of Simon Fraser University and lives in Victoria, British Columbia where he works as software developer. Rupinder has used company matching programs over the years to help double the impact of his donations.



RUPINDER SINGH PARHAR AND HIS SON

*We recently spoke with Rupinder to learn more about why he supports Seva Canada.*

**Seva:** Can you tell us a bit about yourself?

**Rupinder:** I am a quirky person who is looking to make an impact and change in this world. I love a great “Dad” joke and currently work as a Software Development Team Lead at Benevity, a Certified B Corporation (businesses that aim to balance profit and purpose). I experience this world slightly different than most as I am legally blind, with a few degrees of central vision, which gives me a new angle/lens to see the world through. I’m not known to sit down much thanks to my wife and son, who continually challenge me to push a little further each and every day.

**Seva:** Do you have a personal connection to Seva’s work?

**Rupinder:** As I am legally blind and live in a high-income country, I have been afforded luxuries that would not have necessarily been provided in other regions of the world.

Throughout my childhood I have been supported and encouraged to grow myself without bounds and I believe that it is my duty to do what I can to give back. I strongly believe that we should not be limited by the birth lottery for social, geographical, and gender statuses, but rather be supported and raised by humanity to be the best versions of ourselves. I am very fortunate for the opportunities bestowed on me and I’m happy to support Seva to make a positive impact in the world!

**Seva:** What inspired you to donate to Seva Canada?

**Rupinder:** There are 2 major things that attracted me to Seva:

## 1. Impact

In countries where there is a struggle to survive let alone thrive, that is where Seva is—serving the underserved. Seva’s work elevates entire communities and regions, but more specifically serves those that typically would not receive care. Our societies show wealth and abundance as standards of success, I say we have that flipped. Success should be evaluated by the standards of care for those that have been neglected. The work Seva does at the core is not just serving a region or a country, but rather raising the standards of success for the world.

## 2. Empowerment

One of the most underplayed facets of Seva that differentiates it from other organizations is empowerment. It is one thing to go in and help, but it is another thing to go and train, educate, and empower folks to build-on/continue the work. This is a huge multiplier and will bear fruit for many generations to come. The training services Seva provides along with other forms of support without a doubt differentiates Seva from other organizations, hands down.

Thank you Seva and thank you Benevity for multiplying the impact I can make to Seva’s mission!

**Thank you Rupinder for your ongoing support of Seva Canada. Because of your generosity, local eye care personnel will be trained and people in low- and middle-income countries will have their sight restored and their lives transformed!**

# HOW YOU HAVE HELPED



THANKS TO YOU, **TRAINED EYE CARE WORKERS** WILL **HELP THOUSANDS IN NEED** SEE AND SUCCEED.



Your gifts this past spring will create locally-managed eye care programs that will serve communities for generations to come. Ophthalmic nurses, community field workers, and cataract surgeons will be trained to provide the power of sight in low-income countries; now and in the future.

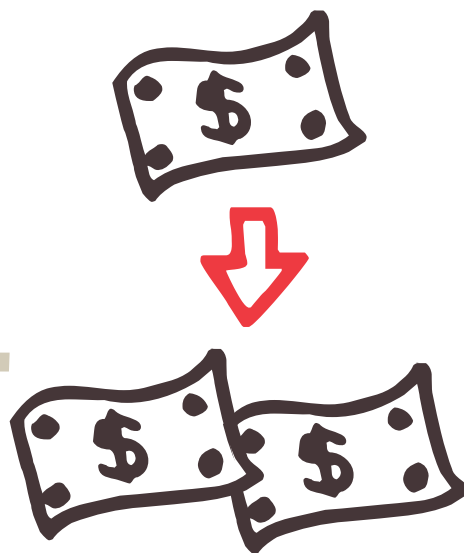
Your generosity will help fund training for:

- **66 ophthalmic nurses** to provide basic eye care to a community
- **60 field workers** to find people in remote communities in need of eye care and ensure they get to the hospital for treatment
- **22 cataract surgeons** to perform thousands of cataract operations per year

## DOES YOUR COMPANY MATCH EMPLOYEE DONATIONS?

If you've made a donation this year, a matching gift from your employer could provide the power of sight to even more people in need.

Simply ask your employer's payroll or human resources department about matching your gift. Completing your employer's form or online application could double or triple your impact!





# HELP KIDS RISE AND THRIVE WITH GLASSES



OUR GOAL IS TO PROVIDE GLASSES TO 2,000 KIDS  
IN NEED WHO ARE GOING BACK TO SCHOOL!

Kids around the world are getting ready to head back to school. Many of these children will need new glasses to help them see the blackboard and read their schoolbooks. **Without healthy vision, kids are 3x more likely to fall behind in class, be bullied, and face social exclusion from their peers.**

90% of children with vision loss live in low- and middle-income countries where access to eye screenings and glasses is limited. Two out of three children with poor vision are girls. The remedy is simple; a pair of glasses can bring a child's world into focus and transform their life.

**You can help provide glasses to 2,000 kids in low-income countries this back-to-school season. A gift of just \$25 can help 5 children see and succeed.**

**\$25**

provides **5 children**  
with prescription glasses

**\$50**

provides **10 children**  
with prescription glasses

**\$75**

provides **15 children**  
with prescription glasses

Please mail in the enclosed form or visit [seva.ca/glasses](https://seva.ca/glasses) to make your gift today.



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# INSPIRING SEVA DONORS

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## Alison Vida

Alison, a member of ForSight, Seva's monthly donor community, first learned about Seva Canada's work from a Brian Harris photography exhibition. Brian is a former Seva employee and talented volunteer photographer. "Brian's images moved me profoundly. He captures so precisely the joyful spirit of people and the majesty of landscapes. His photo-poems brought home the poignancy of being able to see clearly, and introduced me to the work of Seva," said Alison.

Alison is a retired teacher/counsellor, student of Analytical Psychology and lover of metered language and all 4 seasons. She has an affinity for the Tibetan Areas of China where Seva has worked for many years. In the 1970s, Alison met many people from Tibet in Vancouver and discovered the culture of their Himalayan communities.

***"It is a pleasure to help provide the gift of sight, so simple and so potent, and return some of the benefit I have received from encounters with other cultures," said Alison.***



## Rhianna Garland

Rhianna Garland, who lives in Montreal, is a new donor. She recently underwent strabismus surgery to correct her vision. While nervous about the surgery and recovery, she received excellent care from her doctor, the hospital staff, and especially her husband, George. Rhianna's surgery was successful and she is amazed by the positive impact it has had on her quality of life.

"Our eyesight is something that we often take for granted and I was reminded of how precious it is. In Canada, we are fortunate to have access to high-quality medical care. Thinking of those who are less fortunate motivated me to find an organization whose mission it is to improve or restore the vision of people living in low-income countries. Through my research, I came across Seva. I was impressed by the positive reviews and transparent financial reporting.

***The '\$50 can pay for one adult to have cataract surgery' slogan made my donation very tangible. I hope that anyone in a position to do so will consider donating to Seva Canada knowing that this achievable amount of money can drastically improve the quality of someone's life, both physically and in terms of self-confidence. - Rhianna***

I'm interested to learn more about Seva Canada's operations and look forward to supporting their work for years to come," said Rhianna.

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## Shammi Chekkera

Shammi Chekkera, a member of ForSight, Seva's monthly donor community, chose to support Seva Canada after researching Canadian charities, noting the 5-star rating that Seva received from Charity Intelligence, placing the organization amongst the country's top 100 charities. The fact that Seva is Canadian, provides aid internationally, works in the healthcare sector, gives the gift of sight (which is arguably the greatest gift), and is well run by compassionate individuals with integrity and dedication, all makes him proud to be a supporter of the organization.

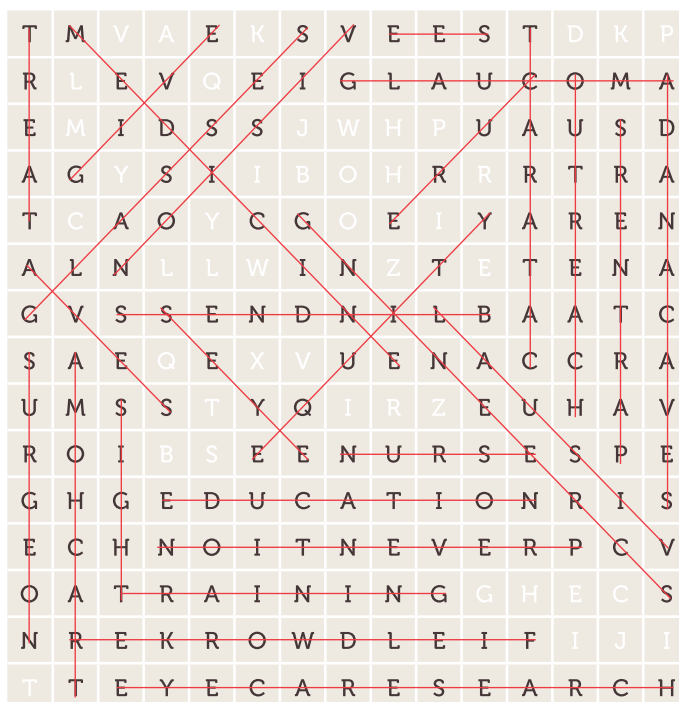
***"It is a worthy cause that makes a tremendous difference in the lives of so many, and it is deserving of recognition, support and funding to ensure the good work is continued and extended," said Shammi.***

## SEVA CANADA WORD JUMBLE ANSWER KEY

blindness  
education  
eyes  
glasses  
nurse  
prevention  
see  
sight  
training  
visual

cataract  
equity  
fieldworker  
glaucoma  
outreach  
research  
seva  
surgeon  
treat

cure  
eye care  
give  
medicine  
partners  
screening  
Seva Canada  
trachoma  
vision



# BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR

RESTORE SIGHT AND PREVENT BLINDNESS. EVERY MONTH.

Join ForSight, Seva Canada's community of monthly donors committed to providing the means, opportunity, and capacity for people in low-income countries to receive surgery, glasses and medicine that they need to build brighter futures. For more information, visit our website at [seva.ca/monthly-giving](http://seva.ca/monthly-giving) or call 1-877-460-6622.

## FOR SIGHT

*"It hits my heart because sight is the most important thing in the whole world. By giving sight to people in remote areas – young and old people – you're giving them a job and freeing them to live independent lives."*

– Current monthly donor

# ABOUT SEVA CANADA

## SEVA'S VISION

Seva Canada's vision is a world in which no one is needlessly blind or visually impaired.

## SEVA'S MISSION

Seva Canada's mission is to restore sight and prevent blindness in low- and middle-income countries.

## SEVA'S GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We are guided by:

- Our belief in equal access to eye care for all
- Our belief that with adequate resources, all people can meet their own needs
- Our commitment to working with international partners to build local, sustainable eye care programs
- Our respect for cultural, ethnic, spiritual and other forms of diversity
- Our commitment to inform and inspire Canadians to join us in achieving our mission

## HONOURARY PATRONS

The Honourable Lloyd Axworthy

The Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson

The Honourable Janet Austin, OBC  
Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia

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