Sightsavers

www.sightsaversindia.in

About Sightsavers

Sightsavers has been working in India since 1966 to eliminate avoidable blindness and to ensure that people who are irreversibly blind are supported adequately to lead lives of independence and dignity.

Partnering with leading organisations in major states, we work sustainably towards eye healthcare, educational support and rehabilitation of people with visual impairment.

Our Vision

Sightsavers' vision is of a world where no one is blind from avoidable causes and where visually impaired people participate equally in society.

Our Mission

We are an international organisation working with partners in developing countries to eliminate avoidable blindness and promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

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India has one-fourth of the world's total blind people and 80% of this blindness is avoidable

Devilal aged - 9 years, lives in Village Galaberi in Barmer district of Rajasthan. He lives in a dhani (a small hut) 6 kilometres from the main road. There are five members in the family. Devilal has some response to light but has no proper vision since birth.

National Urban Eye Health Programme

It is estimated that 30 percent of India's poor reside in urban slums. Approximately 10 percent of our urban population is homeless, while 25 percent of all urban slums are not recognised by the government. Thus, a substantially large number of these impoverished pockets do not receive any health, education or livelihood support from the government.

Sightsavers currently works in three metropolitan cities with the largest slum areas, namely Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata, and is starting projects this year in Jaipur, Bhopal and Indore. The objective of these projects is to ensure comprehensive and sustainable eye health mechanisms are developed within the urban slums of India. At the same time, Sightsavers is also working closely with the Ministry of Health and the newly formulated National Urban Health Mission towards creating systems that provide access to quality eye health to the urban poor. We currently run over 50 eye health centres in our three project cities.

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Bana Mansuri 60 gets her eyes tested at the eye screening centre in Kurla Kamani slums in Mumbai

National Rural Eye Health Programme

Over 70 percent of India's population resides in villages, yet the health care scenario in rural India continues to be in deplorable conditions. This is apparent from the level of the basic development and health indicators, which are below the national averages in most rural districts. Lack of awareness about diseases and preventive measures coupled with limited access (geographic, financial and socio-cultural) to quality health services comprise the deadly combination responsible for this inequity. Isolated efforts by development institutions have succeeded in creating pockets of excellence where primary eye health is delivered in a vertical manner. In most rural communities, eye health (if available) is limited to cataract screening camps and very little attention is given to other eye health problems.

With the expansion of primary health under the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), making primary eye care available to rural and remote areas will provide significant benefits. Sightsavers is currently working in eight of the most underserved states – Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Odisha, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh – to create awareness, provide quality eye health services and eliminate avoidable blindness among the rural poor.

We followed Gobar Bhan Mahesh home to his village in Sunderbans West Bengal. Gobar has been totally blind for 5 years in both eyes. When the bandages were removed he saw his granddaughter properly for the first time in years and he was very happy.

Jetha, who is irreversibly blind stayed at home all day while his brother was at school. He was a very shy child who had lost all his confidence. Today, Jetha has gained confidence and goes to school like any other student in his age group.

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National School Eye Health Programme

Children in the school age group (5-17 years) are especially vulnerable to long term consequences of eye diseases if not detected and treated early. The social and economic impact of visual impairment at this age is enormous, and often results in loss of lifetime productivity and increased burden of providing support for the child. If eye health problems of children in the school-going age group are addressed early, they can lead lives with better learning and more satisfaction.

Realising this need, Sightsavers has for the first time in India launched a National School Eye Health Programme specifically aimed at preventing eye ailments amongst school going children. Under the programme, Sightsavers will initially work in four high-priority states: Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar and West Bengal. We will partner with Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) for conducting regular eye screening camps at government schools, providing spectacles to children in need, and imparting necessary eye health information to parents, teachers and the community at large.

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National Low Vision Programme

Low Vision is a condition in which a person is unable to see properly (visual acuity less than 6/18) even after wearing the best possible lenses to correct vision. Low Vision is 1.05 percent* of India's population.

The National Low Vision Programme of Sightsavers aims to ensure the availability of Low Vision services across the country through the establishment of Low Vision Clinics. The project attempts to bridge gaps in Low Vision management in India by training more medical personnel to undertake low vision assessment and simplifying the process of providing assistive aids and devices to people in need.

The project has facilitated the establishment of low vision clinics in more then 50 percent of the states in India by partnering with charitable hospitals and government medical colleges.

**Guidelines for the Management of Low Vision in India, Vision2020 India, 2013 & NPCB (National Programme for Control of Blindness)*

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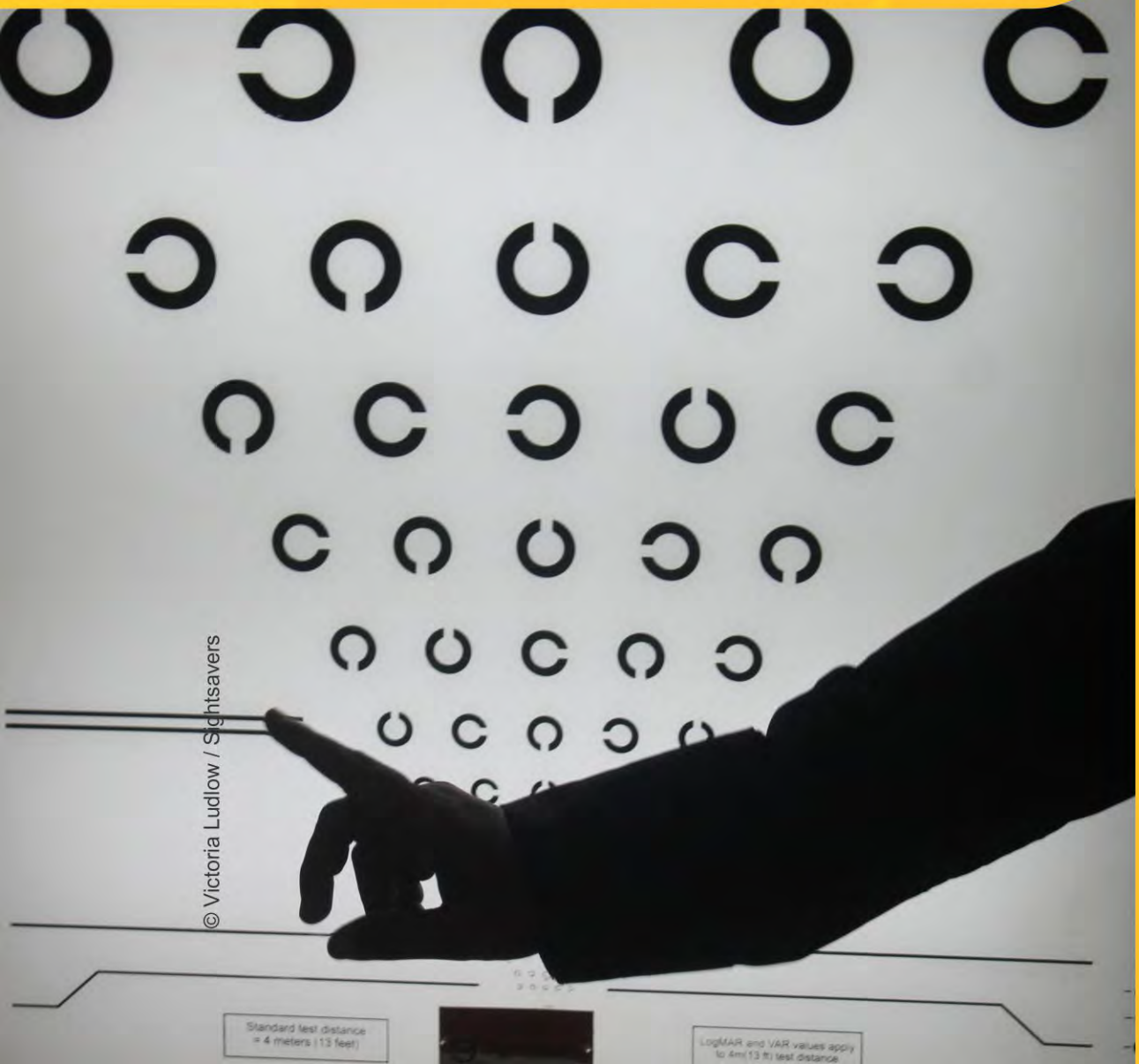

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National Inclusive Education Programme

The Persons with Disability (PWD) Act and the Right to Education Act have together made it possible for every disabled child to access free education till the age of 18. Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) is the government's flagship programme on universal elementary education with a special unit focused on Children with Disabilities (CWDs). As a result of their highly creditable efforts along with Sightsavers, most disabled children are now registered in mainstream schools. The challenge now is to ensure improved learning outcomes where there are not enough resource teachers and other facilities, and to create an environment that is supportive for learning.

As most disabled children from poor communities are in government schools, Sightsavers' strategy focuses on supporting the new SSA strategy of equipping general teachers to teach CWDs, through demonstration, researching, assessing and documenting the progress and impact and helping to scale up. This would also include helping to establish platforms for Inclusive Education in states.

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National Social Inclusion Programme

The fact that visually impaired people constitute nearly half (48.55 percent) of India's disabled population, makes social inclusion an important priority for Sightsavers' national strategy. The government has initiated several schemes for the benefit of persons with disabilities, but poor awareness levels and administrative negligence often result in severe under-utilisation of the benefits of these schemes. Employment rates in the disabled population are also dismally low.

To enable social inclusion of people with disabilities, Sightsavers has concentrated its efforts around three focus areas: economic empowerment, strengthening Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) and creating an enabling environment. Sightsavers therefore supports disabled people through livelihood interventions and facilitates the formation and capacity building of DPOs to carry out effective advocacy for their rights on all platforms and levels.

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Mr. Rewant Ram a young boy of 28 years has been living with the condition of low vision in village Rohini in Nagour district for years. Today, he runs a small shop with the subsidy arranged by Sightsavers' project.

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Partnering with Us

Project support

Support an entire project and track the progress your donation makes over a period of time. You will receive case studies, photos and reports detailing the human impact of your support. Projects range from supporting basic eye health services & supporting persons with disability in entire communities to sending visually impaired children to school.

Payroll giving

Employees in your company can easily contribute a small part of their salary to Sightsavers. It is an automatic deduction eliminating the need for reminders or any paperwork. To implement this option, we will need the consent and participation of not just the employees but the management too. As an employer, you could match the donation made by your employees thereby helping increase your goodwill and our reach.

Cause related marking

Each time you sell a product or service, you could consider donating a part of the sale proceeds to Sightsavers. You could also offer Sightsavers a platform where you allow your customer to make a donation to us. Groupon are helping Sightsavers to eliminate avoidable blindness in India by connecting us to their customers.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Under the Companies Act, 2013, it is now a mandate for those companies whose net worth is of at least Rs 500 crore, or a minimum turnover of Rs 1,000 crore, or a minimum net profit of Rs 5 crore to be socially responsible. Since, eye health and disability is an integral part of the comprehensive health care and rehabilitation system in India hence our work and our activities form an important part of the overall social development scenario of India, which is also reiterated by the new CSR law.

Event sponsorship and participation

Sponsor and participate in Sightsavers' events where your support helps us cover the organising costs. This in turn, gives you opportunities for branding through the event.

Campaigning

Could you add your voice to our cause? Sightsavers works to create awareness, influence policy making and engage government and public bodies to bring about a positive change. Your company could help.

Volunteering

Volunteering opportunities are not only motivating, but can give your employees a sense of connection to the people they are supporting. These could include utilising your employees' particular skill set to assist our work, or volunteering at eye screening camps.

Support Sightsavers' costs

Sightsavers can benefit from donations of products or services that directly contribute to our work, such as medical equipment, logistical support, media space or financial services. Emirates Airlines, has donated Skywards Miles to Sightsavers since 2007, saving enormous cost on essential travel.

Some of our esteemed partners:

- HSBC
- Nomura
- Groupon
- Radio City
- Salesforce
- The Hindu
- Baxter India
- State Bank of India
- Deshpande Foundation
- Standard Chartered Bank
- Fidelity National Information Services (FIS)
- Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL)

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Eye Health

Inclusive Education

Social Inclusion

Sightsavers presence in India

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Sightsavers is registered in India as "Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind" under Bombay Public Trust Act 1950 vide registration number E4330.