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ABOUT US

Sightsavers India or Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind, is a development organisation working with partners to reduce avoidable blindness and promote equality of opportunity for people with disabilities. Sightsavers India is collaborating with various departments of the respective state governments to scale up operations for Social Inclusion, Eye Health and Inclusive Education—our three core areas of work.

We work in a sustainable way to promote lasting change by strengthening existing health systems, engaging with the government, and by demonstrating best practices.

Sightsavers India believes in promoting technologies in eye healthcare, enabling a wider reach of health services. Using innovation in education, we try to make classrooms more inclusive for children with visual impairments.

MISSION

We are a development organisation working with partners in underserved areas of India to eliminate avoidable blindness and promote equal opportunities for people with disabilities.

VISION

Sightsavers India's vision is of a world where no one is blind from avoidable causes and where people with disability participate equally in society.

OUR VALUES

Protecting sight I Equal opportunities I Collaboration



Milestones 2023-24



Sightsavers India's collaborative policy recommendations recognised in G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration

In collaboration with the Civil Society 20 (C20) India Working Group, a G20 engagement group that works to ensure that world leaders hear the demands and recommendations of civil society and Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Sightsavers India proudly announces the recognition of two significant policy recommendations in the G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration.



Sightsavers India organised three policy consultations in Bhopal, Ranchi and Bhubaneswar to deliberate and address critical issues related to gender equality and disability. The consultations included several distinguished guests and expert speakers. They brought together many representatives from Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working in disability, leaders from Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) and gender equality from far and wide.

These recommendations were instrumental in forming the policy recommendations presented and voted on at the Bhubaneswar Gender Equality and Disability Working Group Summit held on the 22nd and 23rd of April, 2023.

These recommendations and Sightsavers India's efforts were also recognised in the final report of the C20 Working Group on Gender Equality and Empowerment.

The two unanimous policy recommendations in the G20 New Delhi Leaders's Declaration stand as follows:

- Ensure equal access to affordable, inclusive, equitable, safe and quality education from early childhood through higher education to lifelong learning and support the greater enrolment, participation and leadership of all women and girls, including those with disabilities, in STEM fields and emerging digital technologies.
- We commit to addressing skill gaps, promoting decent work and ensuring inclusive social protection policies for all. Towards this aim, we: Aim to achieve sustainably financed universal social protection coverage and consider the portability of social security benefits through bilateral and multilateral agreements.

Milestones 2023-24

Sightsavers India's Eight-State Inclusive Education Programme Bags the Zero Award 2024

Sightsavers India's Eight-State Inclusive Education
Programme was awarded the prestigious Zero Project
Award 2024. The programme impressed the
international jury with its innovative use of accessible
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
devices to support the education of children with visual
impairments. This programme goes beyond gadgets as it
provides essential learning materials, and specialised
training for both students and educators and ensures
schools are accessible. This award also recognises
Sightsavers India's commitment to the UN's disability
rights goals, guaranteeing all children have the
opportunity to learn together in a supportive
environment.



Sightsavers India achieves Credibility Alliance accreditation for desirable norms

Sightsavers India, also known as the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind, has been awarded accreditation by the Credibility Alliance. This prestigious recognition signifies Sightsavers India's commitment to excellence and transparency in governance, accountability, and responsible practices within the non-profit sector. The five-year accreditation (valid from August 12th, 2023 to August 11th, 2028) allows Sightsavers India to collaborate and share knowledge with other accredited organisations, ultimately strengthening the voluntary sector as a whole. This recognition reinforces Sightsavers India's credibility and empowers them to pursue their mission of improving lives for those in need.



Major Highlights of the year

01 Inclusive Employment Initiative:

Sightsavers India facilitated job fairs and interview opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) in Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal and hosted 280 enthusiastic participants. Out of them, 52 were selected for interviews, leading to an impressive 49 successful job placements.

02 Bangalore UPHCs:

Sightsavers India integrated two new Vision Centres into Urban Primary Health Centres (UPHCs) in Bangalore, expanding eye care access.

03 Bihar Partners' Meet:

The State Universal Eye Health Partners' Network Meet in Bihar brought together 50 NGOs and private players to improve eye health integration into government monitoring and enhance ophthalmologist quality.

04 Jharkhand Education Meeting:

Sightsavers India contributed to the Jharkhand Education Project Council's (JEPC) Expert Group Consultation Meeting on the Draft "National Guideline and Implementation Framework on Equitable and Inclusive Education.

05 Chennai Vision Centres:

Standard Chartered Global Business Services (GBS) India and Sightsavers India launched two Vision Centres and a Mobile Vision Centre in Chennai. Over four years, these centres aim to screen 90,000+ people, provide 14,000+ spectacles, and identify 10,000+ cataract cases, along with screening 4,000 for diabetic retinopathy.

06 Expanding Eye Care Access:

Sightsavers India, in collaboration with its partners, established a comprehensive network of vision centres to enhance access to quality eye care services. This initiative created Static and Mobile Vision Centres across its programmes, with 227 under Rural Eye Health, 45 under Urban Eye Health and 27 in the RAAHI-National Truckers Eye Health Programme.

07 Chhattisgarh Sensitisation Sessions:

Sightsavers India partnered with Chhattisgarh's Departments of Social Welfare and Health and Family Welfare and conducted the state's first-ever sensitization sessions on disability certification. training over 150 medical practitioners on government policies and guidelines

08 West Bengal Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs):

Ten Block-Level OPDs were formed in Howrah district to ensure social security benefits for all identified persons with disabilities.

09 National Truckers Eye Health Programme:

We've expanded to Balasore and Vishakapatnam with a new Vision Centre, supported by Cholamandalam Investment and Finance, to provide eye care to truck drivers. These centres address the critical need for accessible eye care services in these regions.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON



Rati Forbes
Honorary Chairperson
of the Board of Trustees,
Sightsavers India;
Director,
Forbes Marshall Ltd

As we reflect on the past year, I am deeply inspired by the progress we've made in advancing our mission at Sightsavers India. This year has truly highlighted the power of collective action and the significant impact we can achieve when we focus on empowering individuals and creating inclusive opportunities.

Our commitment to improving eye health and promoting inclusivity was exemplified through initiatives like the Freedom from Blindness Campaign in West Bengal, where we partnered with the State Rural Livelihood Mission to bring essential eye care to women over 60 across 13 rural districts. The Nagaur Women's Eye Care initiative further reinforced our dedication by providing essential screenings and spectacles, focusing on women in need.

In a remarkable stride towards safer roads, Sightsavers India, as part of the National Vision & Road Safety Alliance (VARS), organized a collaborative consultation at IIT Chennai, promoting the VISION Zero approach by integrating eye care into road safety. Stakeholders across sectors pledged to make roads safer by advocating regular vision check-ups for truck drivers, aiming to screen an additional 3 million commercial drivers by 2030.

Another milestone this year was our partnership with SAMARTH, our first direct OPD partner, which has now been included in the 'Odisha State Advisory Board on Disability.' This achievement is particularly significant given Odisha's high disability prevalence rate in India.

Beyond health care, our commitment to addressing critical issues related to gender equality and disability has culminated in two vital policy recommendations that hold the potential to transform lives in the G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration. These recommendations and Sightsavers India's efforts were also recognized in the final report of the C20 Working Group on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

As we look forward, I am confident that by nurturing our most valuable strength, i.e., our dedicated team, we will continue to create lasting and meaningful impact. The future holds immense potential, and I am enthusiastic about the significant changes we can achieve together.

I am delighted to share that Sightsavers India has made remarkable strides this year, further solidifying our commitment to our mission and values. We are proud to have been awarded the prestigious Zero Project Award 2024 for our Eight-State Inclusive Education Programme. This recognition highlights our innovative use of accessible ICT devices, ensuring that children with visual impairments receive the education they deserve in an inclusive environment.

Our National Truckers Eye Health Programme continues to grow, with new centres in Balasore and Vishakhapatnam. These centres are addressing the critical need for accessible eye care for truck drivers, contributing to road safety and overall well-being.

Aligned with our commitment to accessibility and inclusivity, we have integrated Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) as a key principle in our strategy, launching a pilot in Kasganj, Uttar Pradesh, to embed eye health and disability awareness at the village level through local governance.

We continue to expand our reach through strategic partnerships and initiatives. This year, we have successfully renewed our MoU with the Odisha School Education Programme Authority (OSEPA) for another three years, along with renewing our government partnerships in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and West Bengal. This year, seven Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) have been signed with various government departments and agencies in key programmatic areas. These collaborations are pivotal in scaling our programmes and ensuring sustainable impact.

As we look to the future, I am confident that with the continued support of our dedicated team and partners, we will continue to innovate, expand our reach, and create lasting change for those we serve.

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



RN Mohanty CEO, Sightsavers India.



Rati Forbes

Honorary Chairperson, Sightsavers India Board

Rati Forbes is Director at Forbes Marshall Ltd – a company which has been, for over six decades, building steam engineering and control instrumentation solutions that work for the process industry. Rati is responsible for the Social Initiatives, which the company supports in the areas of community health, education and women's issues.



Naheed T. Carrimjee

Senior Associate, Desai & Carrimjee, Advocates and Solicitors, Mumbai

Naheed T. Carrimjee is a solicitor and a founding partner of Desai Carrimjee and Mulla, a firm specialising in corporate and civil law. Naheed is a conscious environmentalist and keenly interested in social & development issues. She supports and is closely involved with several charitable organisations.



Dr Hemachandran Karah

Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Madras

Dr Hemachandran Karah teaches English Literature at the Humanities and Social sciences faculty at IIT Madras. Dr Karah works in the fields of disability studies and medical humanities. A PhD in English Literature from the University of Cambridge, Dr Karah is also Member, Society for Disability Studies, USA and Member, Disability Studies Association, UK.



Dr Alka Barua

MBBS and MD in Paediatrics from Nagpur University and PhD in Sociology from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Bombay

Dr. Alka Barua is a pediatrician, independent consultant, and researcher with a focus on women's and adolescent health, training, capacity building, and action research. She has served as a resource person for training workshops organized by NGOs, the National Institute for Research in Reproductive Health (ICMR-NIRRH), and the World Health Organization.



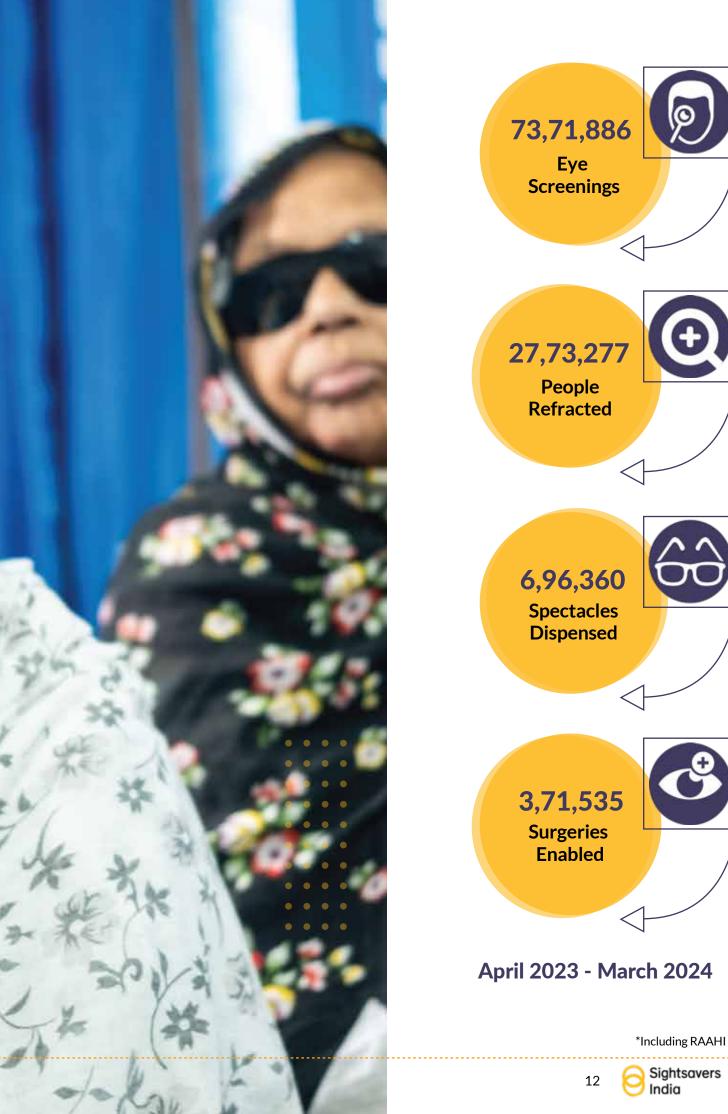
Sunil Bhandari

Chartered Accountant

Sunil Bhandari is a Chartered Accountant, a Certified Leadership Development Coach, a Platinum-rated Development Centre Assessor, and an EQi Coach. He's also a poet, podcast host and film critic.









Key Highlights

Freedom from Blindness Campaign:
Sightsavers India and West Bengal State Rural
Livelihood Mission organised a campaign in 13
rural districts offering free eye screenings,
cataract surgery referrals, and spectacles,
targeting women over 60 in Self-Help Groups.

Samastipur Vision Centre:

With support from Standard Chartered Bank, a new vision centre was established in Samastipur, Bihar, with Akhand Jyoti Eye Hospital as the implementing partner.

Glaucoma Screening in Jharkhand:
Sightsavers India partnered with the District
Health Department and Jharkhand State
Livelihood Promotion Society for a glaucoma
screening in Hazaribagh.

Natni Health Camp:

In Madhya Pradesh, Sightsavers India integrated eye exams into a health camp in Katni district, providing eye care to 358 people, with 132 receiving new glasses and 10 referred for cataract surgery. Approval was secured from the Katni District Collector.

Juanga Community Screenings:

In partnership with LVPEI, eye screenings were conducted in Harichandanpur Block, Odisha, revealing 10 cataract cases among 75 screened individuals, ensuring access to Eye Health for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups.

Nagaur Women's Eye Care:

Six camps were organised in Nagaur's Makrana and Jayal blocks, prioritising women's access to eye care. Out of 1,160 screened, 716 received free eyeglasses, with 62% of the recipients being women.

Targeted Training Programme Enhanced Skills of Ophthalmic Staff:

A targeted training programme in Unnao, Uttar Pradesh enhanced the skills of 20 government ophthalmic and para-ophthalmic staff members. This initiative focused on equipping them with the latest knowledge and techniques in eye care, ensuring they were prepared to meet the evolving needs of patients.

A New Dawn

Meet Sunni Bai, a resilient 60-year-old widow from one of the High-Impact areas identified by Sightsavers India under its Rural Eye Health Programme in the Katni district, Madhya Pradesh. Sunni Bai faced severe vision problems due to cataracts. After losing her husband a year ago, she struggled to make ends meet with her two remaining children in the village, as her sons, skilled masons, were often away for work and had limited financial resources to seek medical help.

Hope arrived when she heard about an eye health camp organised by Sightsavers India in collaboration with Sadguru Netra Chikitsalaya (SNC). There, specialists diagnosed her with mature cataracts in both eyes. On August 25, 2023, she underwent cataract surgery on her right eye. Her vision improved significantly from severe impairment to 6/18, and the joy on her face when she could see again was a heartwarming testament to the life-changing impact of the surgery.





Key Highlights

Mobile Eye Health Unit in Madhya **Pradesh:**

A Mobile Eye Health Van was launched by Ms Priyanka Das, Mission Director of National Health Mission, in the presence of government officials.

Diabetic Retinopathy Care:

To enhance diabetic retinopathy care, Sightsavers India provided training on proliferative diabetic retinopathy (PDR) screening and referrals for ophthalmic teams at urban vision centres in Madhya Pradesh. Additionally, diabetic retinopathy camps were conducted, screening 62 people, with 28 receiving free spectacles.

Patna Urban Vision Centre:

With support from the Mayor, we launched the second Urban Private Vision Centre in Patna, Bihar.

Indore Central Jail Screening: In partnership with SMFG India Credit Co. Ltd.; we organized a mobile eye screening

camp for 478 inmates, providing free spectacles to 181 with refractive errors.

Kanpur Nagar Police Eye Screening:

A special eye camp was conducted at the police commissioner's office, screening 103 personnel and providing spectacles to 50 with refractive errors; also screened 46 Special Task Force members in Bhopal.

Mega Eye Camp in Pune:

In partnership with Civil Hospital, over 13,000 individuals were screened, vision correction for 625, and timely intervention and referral for 55 cataract patients.

Seeing Life Anew

This life-altering support was only possible due to the dedicated support of Sightsavers India and the team." - Chhote

Chhote Lal, a 75-year-old resident of Indore, lives with his wife, son, daughter-in-law, and grandchildren. Despite his age, he supports his family by packing cotton buds at home, struggling to make ends meet. One day, a Mobile Vision Centre, under the ambit of Sightsavers India's Urban Health Programme, with support from SMFG India Credit Co. Ltd. visited his area. Having had trouble with vision for a while now, Chhote seized the opportunity and underwent an eye examination and was diagnosed with a cataract.

Initially hesitant due to financial concerns, Chhote was relieved to learn that the surgery would be free of cost. Encouraged by the Mobile Vision Centre staff, he proceeded with the treatment. After a successful cataract surgery, Chhote Lal regained clear vision, transforming his life and lifting a significant burden off his shoulders.





Sightsavers India Celebrates International Women's Day



On Women's Day, Sightsavers India celebrated by organising extensive eye care initiatives focusing on women's health. We conducted large-scale eye screenings for over 711 individuals, with 550 being women, across 18 Vision Centres in South 24 Parganas and Raipur, providing free spectacles to 177 women. Awareness campaigns and free screenings were held in Nagaur, Sirohi, Dhenkanal, and West Bengal, addressing women's specific eye health concerns. Additionally, 7 outreach camps under the Urban Eye Health Programme and inclusive eye health camps in West Bengal highlighted the importance of eye care for women and people with disabilities. In Bangalore, an eye screening camp for community mobilisers like Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) and Community Health Workers further emphasised the need for regular check-ups. In Nagpur, 102 women were provided eye screening through the Mobile Eye Health Van. In Patna, 7 camps held outreach camps in 7 locations.

Vidya Jyoti

National School Eye Health Programme

This programme is dedicated to enhancing eye health among school children. Over the past five years the programme has screened 14,93,397 students. We aim to integrate eye health into broader school health efforts, with key components including teacher training, service delivery, and eye health awareness, to screen, identify, and enable early detection from Grades I to XII.

Key Highlights

- Eye Health Education in Ramgarh:
 To empower educators and students; we partnered with the Education Department in Jharkhand's Ramgarh district to train 84 teachers in Rampur Block, establish two school eye care champions, and conduct 25 eye health awareness sessions for students.
- Ensuring Accessibility in Odisha: To ensure clear communication for local communities, a one-day master training programme was held for 40 teachers in Odisha. This programme focused on translating School Screening Kit Information Education and Communication materials into the Odiya language.
- Pradesh: Sightsavers India trained 145 government school teachers on eye health, equipping them to educate students with special needs. We further amplified our impact by conducting awareness campaigns in 26 schools, fostering good eye health practices among young minds.
- Award for Children's Eye Health: Received a prestigious award from the Pratapgarh District Administration for the Vidyajyoti School Eye Health Programme, leading to the district's adoption of the approach into its Mission Drishti project to enhance eye health services for school children

Eyes Open to New Possibilities

Aysha, a high school student, faced uncertainty in her vision as she pursued her studies in Class XI. Her father, Asadul, a daily wage earner, struggled to provide for their modest livelihood. During a camp organised by Sightsavers India under its School Eye Health Programme in West Bengal, Aysha was diagnosed with a juvenile cataract, a revelation that brought her to tears and filled her with fear.

With the support of her parents, teachers and team of Sightsavers India, Aysha overcame her hesitation and underwent surgery at Siliguri Greater Lions Eye Hospital, a valued Sightsavers India clinical partner, free of cost. After the successful procedure, Aysha's vision was restored, allowing her to focus on her studies without the burden of impaired sight. Empowered by her clear vision, Aysha can now fully pursue her educational dreams.





RAAHI

National Truckers Eye Health Programme



As one of the largest eye health programmes in the country, RAAHI delivers essential eye care services directly to truckers. With over 49 sites along India's major haulage routes, including the Golden Quadrilateral and North-South-East-West (NSEW) Corridor, the programme features static centres in transport hubs, outreach camps at key locations and mobile vision centres. We also have a cloud-based technology called the RAAHI App that enhances the delivery of eyecare services to truckers on the move.

Vision and Road Safety Policy Dialogue

Sightsavers India as part of the National Vision and Road Safety Alliance (VARS) organised a one-day consultation at the premier India Institute of Technology, Chennai calling for the VISION Zero approach to road safety by integrating eye care in the road safety space.

The conference was participated by stakeholders from Govt, Civil Society, transport, industry, eye health and academia. The consultation deliberated on vision-induced road safety measures and provided best practices and collaborative initiatives for road safety space.

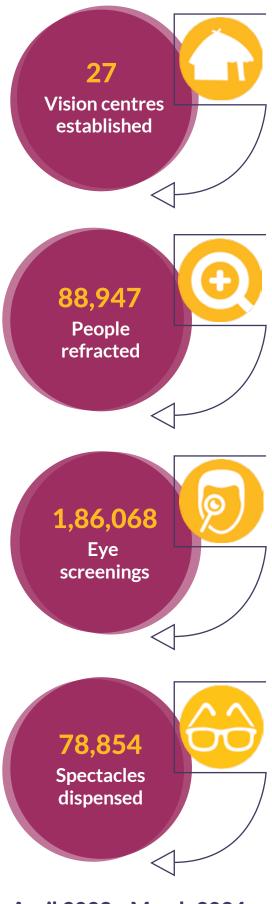
The Third Edition of VARS in its declaration committed: To fostering and promoting safer roads for drivers and pedestrians by:

- ★ Pledging to advocate for comprehensive eye care and regular vision check-ups among truck drivers.
- Acknowledging that road safety is a collective responsibility, and we commit to raising awareness about the impact of impaired vision on driving.
- Encouraging governments, policymakers, and relevant stakeholders to prioritize and invest in initiatives that promote eye health and ensure accessible vision care for all, for the good of all road users, including pedestrians and cyclists.
- ★ VARS will collectively vision screen an additional 3 million commercial vehicle drivers and allied workers by 2030.

Key Highlights

- ▶ Financial Literacy Initiative for Truckers: We have initiated a training programme to boost truck drivers' financial literacy. Five India Vision Institute (IVI) staff completed a Training of Trainers (ToT) course and led two 2-hour workshops for 30 drivers, using analogies and stories to highlight financial skills.
- Expanding Eye Care Access with Technological Advancements: Kanpur, Aurangabad, Chennai, and Paradeep were chosen for the initial introduction of Auto Refractometers. These devices automate refractive error measurement, enhancing precision and accuracy in eye exams. An impact evaluation will follow to assess their effectiveness in improving vision health outcomes.
- New RAAHI Application for Optimised Trucker Eye Care: Launched in January 2024, Sightsavers India's RAAHI app for truckers features OTP registration, GIS tracking, automated spectacle ordering, real-time inventory management, camp creation from tablets, and direct spectacle dispensing. It also integrates with WhatsApp, to enable knowledge sharing for truck drivers on the move.





April 2023 - March 2024

Eyes on the Road: Chhattisgarh's First Woman Truck Driver Sheds Light on Eye Health

Kajal, a 24-year-old trailblazer from Durg, Chhattisgarh, is the first lady truck driver in the state, breaking barriers and proving that gender should never limit one's career choices. She has been driving trucks since the age of 21, defying societal norms and pursuing her passion for the open road.

On October 5, 2023, Kajal visited Sightsavers India's Mobile Eye Health Unit under the RAAHI Programme, which provides healthcare services to truckers at their convenience. Though she had no vision issues, Kajal took advantage of the opportunity for a routine eye check-up. The medical staff, found her eyes to be perfectly healthy and were inspired by her story.

Kajal shared her journey with the locals gathered around the clinic, emphasising the importance of following one's passion and the need for regular health check-ups, even when feeling fine. Her story inspired others to challenge stereotypes and prioritise their well-being, just as she has done on the roads of Chhattisgarh.



Sightsavers India's Fellowship Program

The Sightsavers India Fellowship Programme provides a distinctive and promising career for ophthalmologists. It is crafted to guide selected fellows through a rewarding 24-month journey. This structured programme enhances skills and provides mentorship across various domains, including clinical and surgical ophthalmology, as well as managerial and holistic life skills development.

Through training eye care professionals and encouraging them to work in rural areas, the programme aims to ensure equitable and impactful eye healthcare services across the most underserved parts of the country.













Key Highlights

Making a Difference on the Ground:

Eleven Sightsavers India Fellows from 2022 and 2023 are placed in ten peripheral locations in districts Aurangabad; Gaya in Bihar; Bankura, Jamalpur in West Bengal; Hazaribagh in Jharkhand; Jhabua, Kasganj, Satna in Madhya Pradesh; Kalahandi in Odisha and Rajnandgaon in Chhattisgarh tackling access barriers and bringing vital eye care directly to communities.

Surgical Expertise Expands:

Six 2022 fellows honed their expertise through Phacoemulsification training, performing over 10,000 surgeries since January 2023. This strengthens rural surgical capacity and improves access to sight-restoration procedures.

Gearing Up the Next Generation:

Five 2023 fellows completed Small Incision Cataract Surgery (SICS) training and began rural placements in January 2024. A collaborative meeting ensured a smooth transition and ongoing support.

Learning at the Forefront:

The 2023 batch actively participated in the prestigious 82nd Annual Conference of the All-India Ophthalmological Society (AIOC) held in Kolkata, gaining valuable insights from leading experts and staying current on cutting-edge advancements. They also attend the comprehensive trade exhibition, showcasing the latest technologies and services in ophthalmology.

Impact through the Sightsavers India's Fellowship **Program in Rural India**

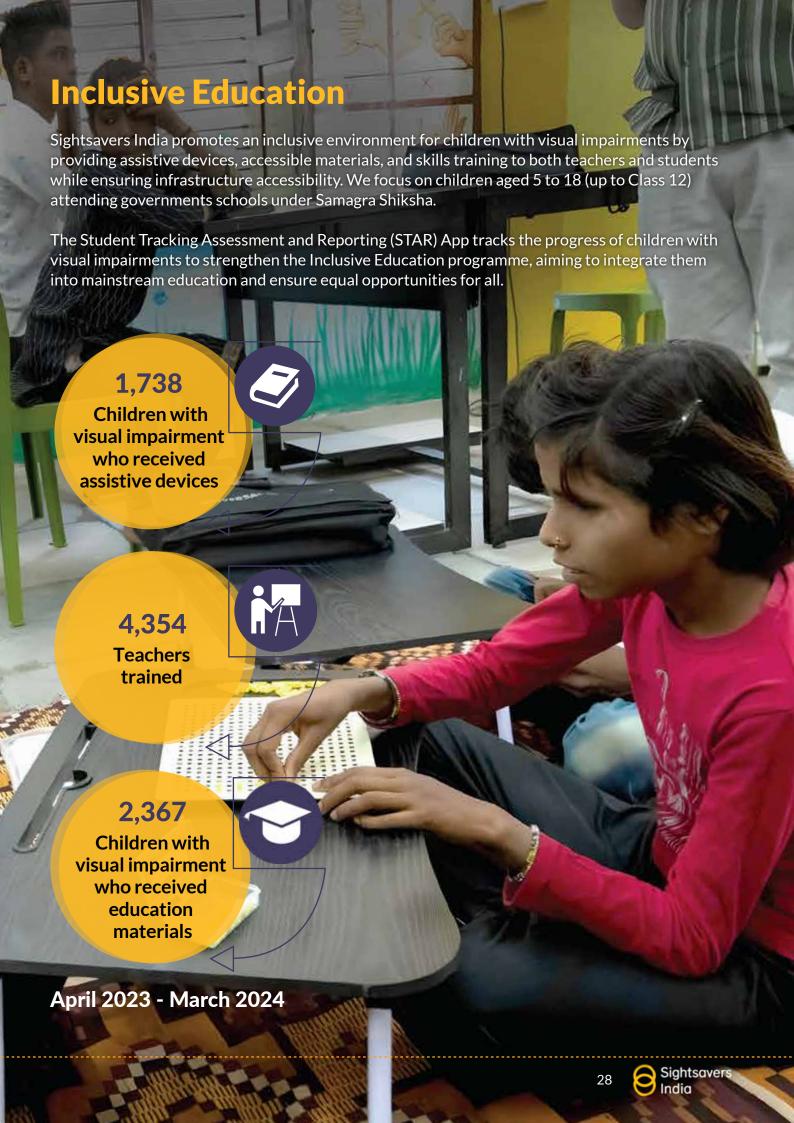
Dr. Saif, a dedicated ophthalmologist from a small town in Uttar Pradesh, realised his childhood dream of becoming a doctor to positively impact society. After earning his M.S. in Ophthalmology from Aligarh Muslim University in 2022, he joined the Sightsavers India Fellowship program, where he received four months of intensive training at ICare Noida which was followed by 20 months of peripheral posting. This training prepared him to become a skilled cataract surgeon.

In January 2023, Dr. Saif began his journey as an ophthalmologist at The Christian Fellowship Hospital in Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh, serving the rural and tribal population. He found deep satisfaction in conducting eye surgeries, engaging with the local community, and counselling patients, many of whom suffered from near-blindness due to poverty.

Dr. Saif, performed about a thousand cataract surgeries, including one for 60-year-old widow Shukham Bai from Chhuria village. After years of deteriorating eyesight, she was referred to the hospital, where Dr. Saif diagnosed her with bilateral cataracts. Following surgery, her vision improved to 6/18. She expressed her excitement about celebrating Diwali and experiencing the festival lights properly for the first time in years.

Dr Saif's work exemplifies his commitment to transforming lives through surgical intervention and the support of Sightsavers India.





Key Highlights

- MoU Renewal: Sightsavers India successfully renewed the MoU with the Odisha School Education Programme Authority (OSEPA) for another three years.
- Teacher Training in Chhattisgarh: Sightsavers India in Chhattisgarh collaborated with the State Inclusive Education Cell to organise a five-day in-service training for 90 special educators from various districts. The training equipped educators with updated knowledge and techniques in special education, including the use of ICT, smartphones, and Bookshare, to improve accessibility for students.
- 10th Board Exam Success: Sixty-six children with visual impairments from Ganjam, Kalahandi, and Kendujhar districts in Odisha passed their 10th board exams. Among them, 12 received Information and Communications Technology devices, and 20 benefitted from audiobooks provided by Sightsavers India.
- **D** Laptop Distribution: Sightsavers India participated in a state-level programme with the Odisha School Education Programme Authority (OSEPA), distributing 80 laptops to children with visual impairment in the Khurda district, promoting digital inclusion.
- West Bengal Educational Milestone: Sightsavers India secured a Letter of Understanding and approval from the West Bengal Department of Education to enhance educational opportunities for children with disabilities in the Howrah and Bankura districts. They promptly conducted a four-day teacher training programme on Inclusive Pedagogy in Bankura.

- Inclusive Education in Rajasthan: Continuous engagement by Sightsavers India led to a budget increase for Inclusive Education (IE) initiatives and secured a prominent role as the technical lead in the core committee for Inclusive Education in Rajasthan.
- Guidelines for Children with Special Needs Hostels in Madhya Pradesh: Sightsavers India collaborated with Rajya Shiksha Kendra to develop comprehensive guidelines for Children With Special Needs (CwSN) hostels across 52 districts. These guidelines address the specific needs of children with visual impairment and establish a robust assessment checklist.
- SMART Glasses Distribution:

Sightsavers India, in collaboration with the Jharkhand Education Project Council and Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, organised a special event which provided orientation and distributed Smart Glasses designed for Children with Visual Impairments (CVI). These assistive devices promote greater educational inclusion by enabling CVI to access information in real time.

- Leadership Training in Madhya Pradesh: Sightsavers India organised a state-level orientation programme for 51 Academic **Progress Champions for Inclusive Education** (APCs) and 76 CwSN Hostel wardens across 52 districts.
- UNICEF Collaboration: Sightsavers India was invited by UNICEF to develop an agenda for a state-level consultation on education innovation for children with disabilities, where the Rajasthan team of Sightsavers India was invited to lead the panel on education for children with visual impairments.

From Challenges to Top Scorer: Manoranjan's Path to Academic Excellence

"Without the support and guidance of the Sightsavers India team, it would not have been possible." Manoranjan, Jharkhand.

Manoranjan, a spirited 16-year-old from Deoghar, Jharkhand, was born with visual impairment. After struggling to adapt to a residential school where the teachers were unsure how to accommodate his needs, and lack of accessible materials in a regular village school, he faced challenges and withdrew from education. Recognising his potential, Sightsavers India stepped in to support him. They reintroduced Manoranjan to learning through braille literacy, orientation, and skills training, providing him with a laptop loaded with accessible content.

To further his progress, the Inclusive Education (IE) team trained a neighbour, Sonu, as a Social Animator to offer personalised support. With the IE team's guidance, Manoranjan prepared for his 10th board exams, with teachers and his family actively participating in his journey.

His hard work paid off when he scored an outstanding 88%, becoming the top scorer in his school. Empowered by this achievement, Manoranjan now dreams of becoming a teacher.

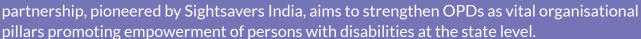


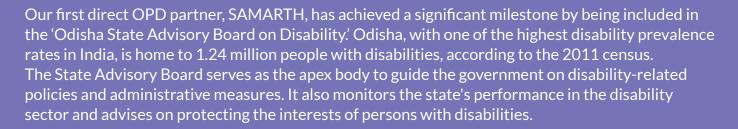
Social Inclusion Through this programme, Sightsavers India are committed to empowering people with disabilities by providing essential skills, tools, and support to help them achieve financial independence and lead fulfilling lives. Our Social Inclusion efforts focus on three core areas: Institution Building, Economic Empowerment, and Creating an Enabling Environment. We also adopt a comprehensive gender approach, offering adolescent girls self-defence training and health and hygiene education. 1,043 **Persons with** Disabilities (PwDs) Trained in Livelihood 63,311 **Total PwDs** Trained on Rights and **Entitlements** 22,288 **PWDs** as members of the OPDs 5,825 SHGs **Facilitated** 31 www.sightsaversindia.org

Direct Partnership with Organisation of

Persons with Disabilities (OPD)

In 2023, Sightsavers India proudly forged its second direct partnership with Birsa Divyang Samity, an Organisation of Persons with Disabilities (OPD) based in Jharkhand. This innovative direct OPD





SAMARTH, which partnered with Sightsavers India last year, has been instrumental in strengthening its organisational vision and strategy, enhancing leadership at various governance levels and expanding its policy influence. Both Birsa Divyang Samity and SAMARTH actively participate in the District Disability Advisory Committee, supporting district administrations in integrating disability into all development and social security agendas.

These partnerships are crucial in localising the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and ensuring the "Leaving No One Behind" mandate is upheld, so that the benefits of SDG implementation reach persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.





Key Highlights

- Kalahandi (Odisha) OPD Divyang Manch:
 The Kalahandi OPD Divyang Manch
 established its office and successfully obtained
 a PAN card in the second quarter. Through
 their efforts, four persons with disabilities
 received a marriage incentive of 2.5 lakhs each
 from the Government of Odisha.
- Career Counselling in Kalahandi, Odisha:
 A district-level career counselling session was held in Kalahandi, Odisha. More than 80 eligible youth with disabilities participated and registered for skill training. Additionally, many eligible persons with disabilities registered on the National Career Service portal for job opportunities and employment.
- SwadhikarTrust in West Bengal:
 Sightsavers India facilitated the registration of the Swadhikar Trust, which is led by 11 persons with disabilities, promoting policy engagement and collaboration within the disability community in West Bengal.
- Programmes for Adolescent Girls in
 Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh: Sightsavers
 India conducted self-defence training
 programmes for adolescent girls with visual
 impairments in Hazaribagh, Jharkhand, and for
 underprivileged girls in Mandla and Raisen
 districts of Madhya Pradesh. In Hazaribagh,
 16 girls were trained, while in Mandla and
 Raisen, 41 girls participated in a week-long
 programme that also included sessions on
 health, hygiene, yoga, nutrition, and
 cybercrime awareness.
- Computer Training in Madhya Pradesh: In Madhya Pradesh's Katni and Hoshangabad districts, five batches of 25 students completed their training at the Tanya Computer Centre. This centre empowers children with visual impairments by enhancing

- their digital literacy, spoken English, health and hygiene, daily living skills, and personality development.
- Economic Empowerment in Dungarpur, Rajasthan: Sightsavers India is advancing economic empowerment for persons with disabilities in Dungarpur by forming 18 Self-Help Groups (SHGs), also known as Disabled People Groups (DPGs) by SRLM. Nine of these groups were linked to bank accounts for smooth transactions, and certification for 20 individuals was facilitated, allowing them to access government benefits under SRLM guidelines.
- RPwD Act 2016 Booklet in Chhattisgarh: Sightsavers India, in close collaboration with the Social Welfare Directorate of Chhattisgarh state, designed and developed a booklet on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act 2016. This booklet was released in Chhattisgarh, marking a significant milestone in promoting inclusivity and empowerment of persons with disabilities in the state.
- Judo Champion in Madhya Pradesh:
 Ms. Priya Keer, a judo champion and part of our Social Inclusion Programme, from Hoshangabad, Madhya Pradesh, brought further glory by being part of the history making Indian Women's Blind Cricket Team that won the gold medal at the IBSA World Games in Birmingham. This team became the first-ever cricket team to win at the event.
- Empowering Persons with Disabilities in Madhya Pradesh: Under its Social Inclusion Programme, Sightsavers India, in partnership with the State Rural Livelihoods Mission (SRLM) and with support from Bajaj, has facilitated the training of 93 new Self-Help Groups (SHGs) for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) in Raisen and Mandla districts of Madhya Pradesh.

Chronicles from the Field

From Struggle to Strength: Jyoti's Inspirational Leadership

In a village in Pratapgarh district, Jyoti's story is one of resilience and empowerment. Struck by calcium deficiency and polio at the age of three, she lost mobility in her right leg, making education and social interaction difficult. Using crutches, Jyoti often withdrew from social gatherings, relying heavily on her loved ones.

However, fate had a transformative moment in store for her. Sightsavers India organized an event in her village focused on people with disabilities. This event introduced her to the rights and opportunities available to those with disabilities, sparking a transformative journey. Jyoti engaged in training sessions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016, Vision Building, and soft skills development.

Now, as a Gender Committee member and Block President of the Organisation of Persons with Disabilities (OPD) APNO Pratapgarh, Jyoti educates her community about the welfare of individuals with disabilities. Her journey from isolation to empowerment serves as a powerful example of determination and the drive to create a more inclusive society.



Sightsavers India Celebrates World Sight Day

On World Sight Day 2023, Sightsavers India showcased its dedication to eye health with impactful initiatives across the country. In Assam, a new primary **eye care centre in Golaghat** was launched, accompanied by diabetes screenings for 104 people. Bihar saw a **Walkathon in Samastipur** and eye screening camps for 135 prisoners and 105 students. In Madhya Pradesh, a **special eye camp in Mirajpur Devgan Village** catered to 37 individuals with disabilities. Rajasthan's Nagaur district hosted four mega camps, reaching 1,275 mine workers, providing 678 with spectacles, and performing 74 cataract surgeries. Finally, West Bengal organised **workplace eye screening and awareness** events through corporate and government partnerships.





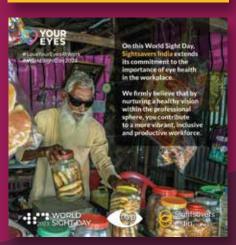














Government Relations and Policy Engagement (GRAPE)

The Government Relations and Policy Engagement (GRAPE) Unit is responsible for building strong external relationships and networks to advance Sightsavers India's initiative against avoidable blindness and to promote equality of opportunity amongst people with disabilities.

The GRAPE unit works to strengthen Government relations and develop strategic alliances, networks, partnerships, and circles of influence to positively impact people-centred policy changes in eye healthcare, disability-inclusive development, and inclusive education in India.

Empowering Local Governance: Sightsavers India's Panchayati Raj Institutions Initiative

Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) are the cornerstone of decentralised governance in India, playing a crucial role in planning and implementing functions related to the 29 subjects listed in the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution. With over 2,78,000 local bodies and approximately 31.88 lakh elected representatives in rural areas, these institutions are vital in ensuring good governance, economic development, and social justice for about 70% of the country's population. Notably, 47% of these elected representatives are women, strengthening women's participation in all development programmes.

Recognising this landscape, Sightsavers India has integrated PRI as a key principle in its country programme strategy. Our programmatic model involves regular interaction with the three tiers of Panchayati functions, understanding that the effectiveness of our initiatives is significantly influenced by stakeholders at these levels.

In May 2023, we launched the PRI pilot initiative in Kasganj district, Uttar Pradesh. As part of this effort, 30 Letters of Understanding (LoU) were signed between 30 targeted pilot Panchayats and Sightsavers India. This project aims to localize the eye health and disability agenda at the village level. Early results from the pilot are promising, showing positive trends in gender and demographic equity, panchayat saturation of target groups, outsourcing of hospital-driven community efforts to PRIs, programme cost-effectiveness, and overall sustainability.

This initiative marks a significant step towards empowering local governance and ensuring inclusive development through active participation and collaboration with Panchayati Raj Institutions.



Programme Performance, Research and Learning Department

The Programme Performance, Research and Learning (PPRL) department is at the core of our commitment to organisational-based action across all our thematic programmes. This team diligently gathers analyses, and interprets data from various programme activities, offering invaluable insights into programme performance through robust monitoring and evaluation.

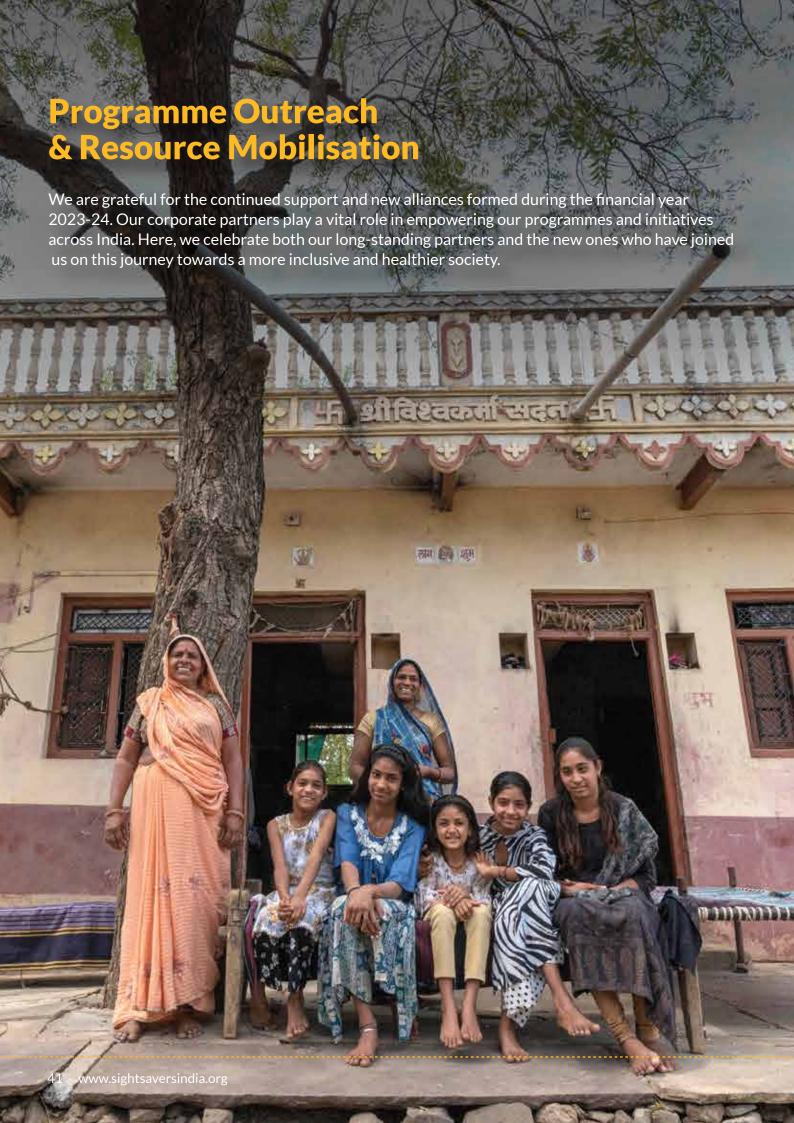
By continually tracking Key Performance Indicators and conducting comprehensive assessments, the PPRL unit empowers us to make real-time, informed decisions, adapt strategies as required, and ensure our programme remains aligned with its goals.

Key Highlights

- Quality Assessment Visits for Vision Centers: A quality assessment was carried out across 40 vision centres, including camps and mobile vans, operated by RAAHI and SCB. The visits aimed to ensure legal compliance, evaluate patient care and service quality, and pinpoint areas for improvement.
- Geo -mapping study in Bangaluru slums:
 The geo-mapping study in Bengaluru's slums examined the socio-economic conditions, housing, infrastructure, healthcare, and accessibility. Using a mixed-method approach, it developed a vulnerability index ranking slums from critical to low priority. Findings revealed overcrowded temporary housing, low education levels, and limited access to government healthcare, with eye care largely dependent on private providers. The study emphasised the urgent need for targeted interventions to uplift these communities and improve their wellbeing.
- Rapid Assessment of Avoidable Blindness (RAAB), Gaya and Samastipur:
 The Rapid Assessment of Avoidable Blindness (RAAB) surveys, conducted under the SCB programme, assessed blindness prevalence in Gaya and Samastipur districts. In Gaya, 3,900 individuals aged 50+ across 65 clusters

- were surveyed, revealing an age- and gender-adjusted blindness prevalence of 1.4% (1.1% males, 1.6% females). In Samastipur, 3,240 individuals aged 50+ from 55 clusters participated, showing 1.6% prevalence (1.2% males, 2.0% females). These insights are vital for planning targeted eye health interventions in both districts.
- Urban Eye Health Programme Endline study for impact evaluation: The Urban Eye Health Programme in Uttar Pradesh, concluded successfully with Standard Chartered Bank's support. It led to heightened awareness of eye check-ups (97% in Kanpur, 100% in Prayagraj), improved access to affordable eye care through Vision Centres (reaching 99.2% and 99.6% affordability respectively), reduced eye care costs (by 85% in Kanpur and 50% in Prayagraj), and fostered stronger community advocacy, paving the way for programme self-sustainability.
- Ensuring Programme Data Accuracy:
 RAAHI conducted Data Quality Audits in
 South 24 Parganas (REH programme) and
 Bangalore Urban (UEH programme). These
 audits verified data collection processes and
 identified areas for improvement.





Our retained partners have been steadfast in their commitment, helping us scale new heights and impact more lives:



































We are excited to welcome our new partners who have joined hands with us to make a significant difference:



conga







Brand & Communications



With Sightsavers India 7 years & counting



Zero Award - Inclusive Education



Cataract Surgery Myths and Facts

Videos

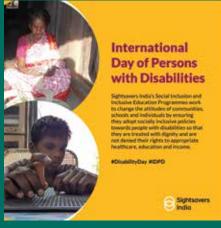


- Freedom Campaign



Women's Day -





International Day of Persons with Disabilities

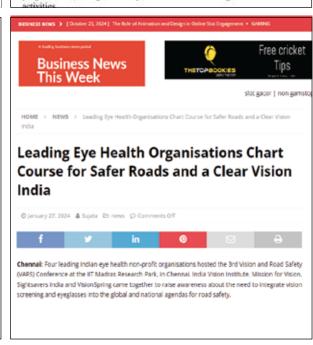
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STAR Application Feature







Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind (All amounts are in Indian Rupees unless otherwise stated) Balance Sheet - (Schedule VIII (Vide Rule 17 (I))) as at 31st March 2024 Registration No. E- 4330 Mumbai

FUNDS AND LIABILITIES	Note	As at 31 March 2024	As at 31 March 2023	PROPERTY AND ASSETS	Note	As at 31 March 2024	As at 31 March 2023
Trust Fund	3	5,47,94,289	2,95,18,432	Immovable properties 5			
				Gross block		37,85,188	37,85,188
Retained Fund	4	2,00,00,000	2,00,00,000	Less : Accumulated depreciation		(30,48,158)	(30,09,367)
						7,37,030	7,75,821
Earmarked Fund Deferred Income	6	2,90,93,175	2,84,26,529	Other Property, Plant & Equipment	5		
Total Funds		10,38,87,464	7,79,44,961	Gross block		3,98,27,665	3,67,46,978
				Less : Accumulated depreciation		(3,21,85,684)	(2,94,67,870)
Liabilities	•	•				76,41,981	72,79,108
- For expenses	7	56,34,104	2,81,39,958	Other Project Property, Plant & Equipment	5		
-For statutory dues		48,04,449	53,72,600	Gross block		1,10,89,446	1,06,39,397
- For grants		1,03,27,732	89,58,065	Less : Accumulated depreciation		(64,67,814)	(50,98,312)
- For payable to employees		1,24,655	2,25,391	·		46,21,632	55,41,085
		2,08,90,940	4,26,96,014	Less : Project Assets Reserve	9	(46,21,632)	(55,41,085)
						-	-
- For employee benefits				Current Assets			
- Provision for gratuity		79,49,826	1,13,48,389	Prepaid expenses		34,94,510	39,85,285
 Provision for compensated absences 		11,79,290	11,59,621	Grant receivable		45,71,477	1,05,75,486
		91,29,116	1,25,08,010	Deposits and advances	8	1,13,28,446	1,66,62,826
				Other assets	9	1,27,63,139	13,77,960
				Cash and bank balances	10	9,33,70,937	9,24,92,499
						12,55,28,509	12,50,94,056
TOTAL		13,39,07,520	13,31,48,985	TOTAL		13,39,07,520	13,31,48,985

Summary of significant policies

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the Financial Statements

As per our report of even date attached

For M S K C & Associates **Chartered Accountants**

Firm's Registration No: 0015955

Partner

Membership No: 516594

Place: Gurugram Date: 4th September 2024





For & on behalf of Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind

Rati Farhad Forbes Chair person

Place: New Delhi

Date: 4th September 2024

R N Mohanty

Chief Executive Officer

Place: New Delhi

Date: 4th September 2024

Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind (All amounts are in Indian Rupees unless otherwise stated) Income and Expenditure Account - (Schedule - IX {Vide Rule 17(1)}) for the year ended 31st March 2024 Registration No. E- 4330 Mumbai

EXPENDITURE	Note	For the year ended 31 March 2024	For the year ended 31 March 2023	INCOME	Note	For the year ended 31 March 2024	For the year ended 31 March 2023
To Expenses in respect of properties:				By Interest			
- Rates, taxes and cesses		-	186	By Grants	11	53,38,21,010	45,54,14,572
- Repairs and maintenance		1,11,462	77,587				
- Depreciation	5	38,791	40,833	By Donations			
To Establishment expenses	14	5,56,42,046	6,15,48,206	- From individuals		16,21,53,905	21,72,00,227
To Legal expenses	•	5,54,000	4,32,590	By Interest	12	39,75,867	29,40,171
To Audit fees		11,16,020	8,49,600	By Miscellaneous income	13	627	3,72,713
To Other expenses	15	3,62,13,819	3,63,80,025	By Excess of Expenditure over income transfer to Surplus Fund		4,86,38,550	
To Depreciation	5	28,59,160	31,06,909	meeme transfer to sarpia.	o i unu		
To Expenditure on objects of the Society	16						
(b) Educational		5,99,49,501	7,44,15,786				
(c) Medical and poverty relief		51,81,90,753	52,77,14,511				
To Surplus transferred to Surplus Funds		2,52,75,857					
			-				

69,99,51,409	70,45,66,233	69,99,51,409	70,45,66,233

Summary of significant policies

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the Financial Statements

As per our report of even date attached

For M S K C & Associates
Chartered Accountants

Firm's Registration No: **0015955**

Sachin Gupta Partner

Membership No : 516594

Place: **Gurugram**Date: 4th September 2024





For & on behalf of Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind

Rati Farhad Forbes

Chair person

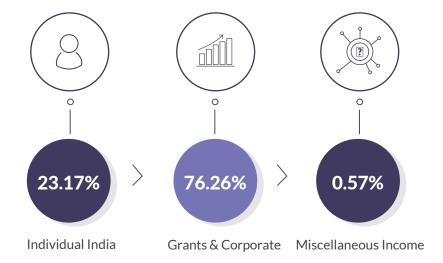
Place: **New Delhi Date:** 4th September 2024

R N Mohanty Chief Executive Officer

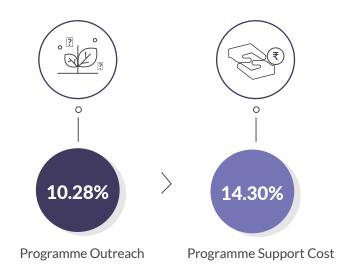
Place: New Delhi

eptember 2024 Date: 4th September 2024

Income FY 23-24

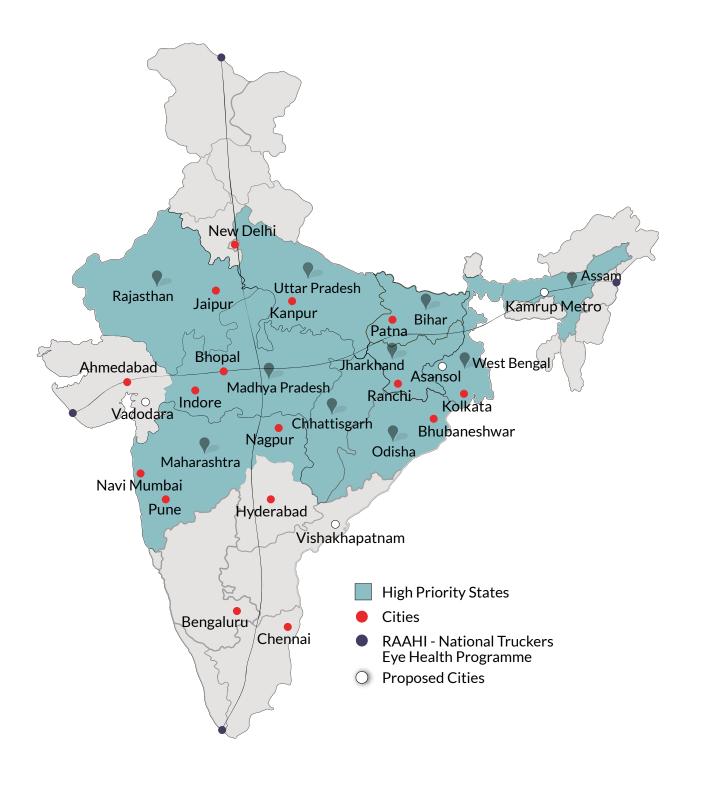


Total Expenditure FY 23-24



Thematic Utilisation





List of Abbreviations

- ASHA: Accredited Social Health Worker
- BRC: Block Resource Centre
- CHO: Community Health Officers
- CRC: Cluster Resource Centre
- CVI: Children with Visual Impairment
- CWD: Children with Disabilities
- CwSN: Children with Special Needs
- DDRC: District Disability Rehabilitation Centres
- DPC: District Project Coordinator
- DPG: Disabled People Group
- DR: Diabetic Retinopathy
- IBSA: The International Blind Sports Federation
- ICT: Information and Communications Technology
- JEPC: Jharkhand Education Project Council
- PDR: proliferative diabetic retinopathy
- LVPEI: LV Prasad Eye Institute
- LV: Low Vision
- MSME: Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises
- MT: Master Trainers
- NHM: National Health Mission
- NUHM: National Urban Health Mission
- OPDs: Organisations of Persons with Disabilities
- PwD: Persons with Disabilities
- RAAB: Rapid Assessment of Avoidable Blindness
- RSETI: Rural Self Employment Training Institutes
- R2C: Ready to Clip
- SDG: Sustainable Development Goals
- SHG: Self-Help Group
- SmSA: Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan
- UDID: Unique Disability ID
- UEHP: Urban Eye Health Programme
- UPHC: Urban Primary Health Centre
- VARS: Vision & Road Safety Alliance
- VC: Vision Centre





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