



## Seva Foundation Site Visit Report: October 26-30, 2015

Guatemala City and San Benito, Guatemala

### BACKGROUND

Seva Foundation helps end preventable blindness in Asia, Africa and Latin America through sight restoring surgeries and other interventions. The organization trains, supports, equips and subsidizes local practitioners in the countries where they have a presence. Seva provides eye operations at an average cost of \$50. SEVA was one of Focusing Philanthropy's inaugural partner nonprofits joining our portfolio in 2012. Since then we have collaborated each year to expand access to Seva's programs.

This year we staged our 4<sup>th</sup> Annual World Sight Day campaign with a goal to raise \$470,000. We surpassed that goal raising over \$512,000, funding 7,400 sight-restoring surgeries in 12 countries and providing much needed medical equipment in Nepal, Cambodia, Tibet, and the United States. Over the past four years, the collaborations between SEVA and Focusing Philanthropy have resulted in over \$1 million of support and over 21,000 sight-restoring surgeries across 14 countries.

### WORLD SIGHT DAY CAMPAIGNS - GUATEMALA

Through our 2015 WSD campaign Visualiza received funding to provide 250 sight-restoring surgeries.

### THE DILIGENCE SITE VISIT

From October 26<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>, Focusing Philanthropy team members joined Seva Foundation and Visualiza staff to visit their clinics and programs in Guatemala City and in San Benito (which is in the Peten region of Guatemala). Focusing Philanthropy has now visited six different Seva program partners in four countries. This trip is the first time FP has visited the same Seva partner and program sites for a second time. Participants in the 2015 site visits included:

- **FP team:** Elliott Gilson (visited the Guatemala program previously), Beatriz Moreno (first time visitor to the Guatemala program), and Keith (FP SEVA donor)
- **Seva Foundation:** Jack Blanks and Julie Nestingen
- **Visualiza:** Juan Francisco (architect and head manager – first time FP met with him), Dr. Edgar Ogaldez (ophthalmologist), Douglas (office manager), Adella (San Benito Clinic Manager)

Visualiza continues to employ a social enterprise model wherein profits from paying clinic patients subsidize free or discounted services in Guatemala City and San Benito. In addition, in both locations, care of paying patients and social service patients leverage common personnel and facilities. For detailed reports on Visualiza's model in both the Guatemala City and San Benito clinics please refer to the following diligence trip reports from FP's visit in spring 2013:

- Guatemala City Clinic  
<http://www.focusingphilanthropy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Seva-Trip-Report-March-2013-Guatemala-City.pdf>
- San Benito Clinic  
<http://www.focusingphilanthropy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Seva-Trip-Report-March-2013.pdf>

**Day 1:** The team met early in the morning to tour the Visualiza facilities in Guatemala City. We were reintroduced to the clinic managers, doctors and other staff. The operations were just as the last time FP visited the site - clean, efficient, and running the same model as before, albeit in expanded facilities. Pictured below are a selection of photographs of Visualiza's new clinic building that is projected to triple their daily



capacity to see both subsidized and fully covered patients. The three floors will include a larger waiting room, more space for examinations and a cafeteria.

*Pictured below to the left is the new Ophthalmologist room. Pictured to the right is the counseling room – this is where patients go to better understand the eye procedure they will receive and financial cost and subsidy (if available to them).*



*Pictured below are patients waiting to purchase glasses in Visualiza's new clinic*



**Days 2 and 3 – The Clinic:** The team spent the day at the Vincent Pescatore Eye Clinic in San Benito to observe Visualiza's operations. The clinic was noticeably full both days that the team spent here. Though the Guatemala City clinic treats both paying customers and needy patients who can not afford to pay either a part or all of the cost of their eye treatment, the Vincent Pescatore Eye Clinic only caters to needy patients. This is the only clinic of its kind in the Peten region of Guatemala. It is not uncommon for this clinic to see patients from Mexico and Belize as well.





After being evaluated by the doctors, patients who need cataract surgery wait for surgery. Patients pictured below to the right are beginning surgery prep and will have a cataract removed from one of their eyes. They all have badges that tell the ophthalmologist what eye is receiving the cataract surgery. The ones labeled OD are for the right eye, and the ones labeled OS are for the left eye.



FP team member Elliott Gilson observes as local anesthesia is applied to a cataract patient. To the left you can see a patient's cataract prior to surgery.





*Julie of SEVA Foundation observes as Dr. Olgaldez performs a sight-restoring surgery. Four patients are brought into the OR at a time. The ophthalmologist is operating on one of these patients, and his two assistants prep the other three. This efficient process is one of the many reasons Visualiza is able to perform a high-volume of cataract surgeries.*

*Patients line up a day after having their sight-restoring surgery to have their bandages removed.*



### **Day 2 and 3 – Patient Home Visits:**

The diligence site visits included two home visits to patient treated by SEVA – VISUALIZA earlier in the year. On Day Two, after spending the morning at the Vincent Pescatore Clinic, the FP, SEVA, and Visualiza team members drove about an hour towards the border with Belize to visit Wendy – a young patient who had received sight restoring surgery at the San Benito clinic earlier this year. It is common for patients who have received cataract surgery to require corrective glasses.



Wendy and her younger sister are pictured holding up a homemade sign that reads: "Welcome – thank you SEVA for visiting my humble home. My family and I receive you with much love."



Pictured below to the left is Wendy's home and family. To the right are Julie of SEVA, Wendy, and some of her sisters as they wait for a Polaroid picture of them to develop.





*At the second home visit, we visited two elderly patients who had been cataract surgery performed recently. Having been bilaterally blind before the recent procedure on one eye, the man was to return to the Visualiza clinic by November 30th to have sight-restoring surgery performed on his other eye. Visualiza, and Seva team members help the elderly woman who had also received sight-restoring cataract surgery find a place to sit during our visit.*





*FP team members, Elliott Gilson and Keith Ennis watch as the three grandkids of Visualiza patients play together during our visit.*