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VisionSpring raises \$1.5 million for India COVID-19 response and will deliver more than 1,000 oxygen concentrators to expand care

Social Enterprise Deploys Global Team to Procure Personal Protective Equipment and Oxygen Concentrators in Race to Meet Medical Needs in India

May 20, 2021 (New Delhi, India) - VisionSpring (www.visionspring.org), the pioneering social enterprise, has secured an initial \$1.5 million in emergency response commitments for the COVID-19 crisis in India and will deliver more than 1,000 oxygen concentrators and other COVID-19 care and safety supplies to frontline health workers.

Known for creating access to eyeglasses for people living on less than \$4 per day, VisionSpring pivoted its operations to emergency response in the race to save lives and slow the spread of COVID-19 in India.

VisionSpring's four-pillar response is rooted in meeting critical and urgent needs in low-income communities and within its network of 200 health and eye care partners across India.

- 1. Personal Protective Equipment & COVID-19 Supplies for Frontline Workers:** In addition to 1,000 sponsored oxygen concentrators already being dispatched, VisionSpring has distributed 1.4 million units of PPE within India since the start of the pandemic.
- 2. Cloth Masks and Hygiene Kits:** To guard against economic hardship for women artisans, VisionSpring commissioned an additional 50,000 cotton masks from the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) Bharat, totaling 500,000 produced since the start of the pandemic.
- 3. Handwashing Stations:** With 40 delivered in recent weeks, an additional 200 specially designed handwashing stations are being fabricated in Delhi.
- 4. Infection Prevention Information and Vaccine Mobilization:** VisionSpring will integrate vaccine registration and hesitancy counseling into its thousands of COVID-safe vision outreach programs when they restart in the future.



“India’s fierce second wave of COVID-19 has exposed huge shortages in the health care system, not least the gap between demand and supply of medical equipment. To help bridge this, we are grateful to partner with VisionSpring to supply 500+ oxygen concentrators to various healthcare facilities as part of our emergency response to Covid relief requirements on the ground,” said Atul Satija, CEO and Founder 2.0 of GiveIndia, the online fundraising platform of nonprofit Give Foundation.

VisionSpring’s response is supported by partners including Warby Parker, National Vision Inc., Skoll Foundation, The Canary Charitable Foundation, McNulty Foundation, ClearVision, Safeway Concessions (Siddhantam Tollway Private Limited), Touch of Color Foundation, SEWA Bharat, World Zoroastrian Organization US Region, Zarin Neville Foundation, International Medical Corps, and Anheuser Busch InBev.

“Our emergency deployment builds on a year of COVID-19 mitigation activities in low-income communities. The flexible support of our funders and fantastic collaboration with partners has enabled us to quickly adapt,” said Ella Gudwin, VisionSpring, CEO. “We are meeting the urgent need for COVID-19 treatment capacity now, and are also focused on the long-term public health objectives of prevention and expanding vaccination coverage.”

In March 2020, VisionSpring retooled its global supply chain to respond to the emerging COVID-19 pandemic. Within two weeks of the first lockdown in India, they delivered their first orders of PPE. By year-end, they had provided over 2.8 million units of PPE and other COVID-19 supplies to 161 partners in India, Bangladesh, and five countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

VisionSpring also developed the first [COVID-safe vision outreach protocols](#) to deliver Vision Access Programs in informal settlements, factories, tea gardens, artisan cooperatives, transport hubs, and rural villages. They innovated their approach to donor engagement, creating [virtual site visits](#) to showcase COVID-19 prevention campaigns in Delhi and Rajasthan, India.

More information about VisionSpring’s COVID-19 response can be found at www.COVID19.visionspring.org.



About VisionSpring

VisionSpring is the pioneering, international social enterprise accelerating the uptake of affordable eyewear among people who earn less than \$4 per day. Founded in 2001, VisionSpring uncovers latent demand for vision correction; conducts community, workplace and school vision screenings; trains others to do the same; and supplies radically affordable, durable eyeglasses. VisionSpring has delivered more than 7.5 million pairs of eyeglasses, providing vision correction in 53 countries with over 400 NGO, corporate, government and health partners. They have been recognized for their innovative work, receiving multiple awards including the Skoll Award; social entrepreneur fellowships from Draper Richards Kaplan, the Aspen Institute, and the Schwab Foundation; and honors from World Bank, Duke University, Fast Company, and Tribeca Film Festival, among others.

www.visionspring.org

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