

# Girls In India Face Hardship

## A Project Prakash Volunteer & Science Team Member Shares Her Story & Asks For Your Help

By Dr. Amy Kalia

To be a blind girl in India is even harder than it may seem, if you can imagine that. I know because I've spent years tracking their lives and witnessing child blindness in India firsthand.



This is what I learned, and why I hope you will [donate](#) \$50 today to the Girls Appeal through Project Prakash.

I am a longtime Science Team member and volunteer with Project Prakash. I joined the Sinha Lab specifically to assist with Project Prakash and have had the opportunity to get to know the Prakash children during my trips to Delhi. I just spent 5 months in India as a Fulbright Scholar to further the organization's mission and gain a critical grassroots understanding of what is happening in India.

Estimates from the World Bank suggest that as many as 350,000 girls in India suffer from blindness. They suffer from tremendous injustices. Figures show that less than 10% of these children will ever attain even a basic education. More than 75% will experience some form of sexual or physical abuse. The vast majority will live deeply impoverished.

Through our eye camps, we are able to identify girls in need of help across hundreds of villages in India. These girls regularly experience malnutrition and insensitivities — even from their families. In one case, I was testing a 15-year old patient, who, after surgery, was struggling to name pictures of objects on a screen.

Her older sister and father watched and would comment on how poorly she was doing. I tried to quiet them. They didn't listen. Sometimes they would chuckle or shake their heads. I hurt for her.

These girls are deserving of opportunities, but they don't get them. I interviewed the father of two daughters who had received treatment for cataracts a few years earlier. Only the younger daughter is allowed to go to school.

"Why do you keep the older daughter at home?" I asked the father.

"She doesn't need an education. She will get married soon," he said.

That child is 14 years old.

We don't know the stories of the children who do not make it to the hospital, what kind of lives they lead, and whether they receive any support from their families. But, we do know that they are out there.

Your [donation](#) enables us to reach out to more girls. Statistics show that investing in girls is the single best investment a society can make. Thank you for sharing and caring.