



# 2019 Annual Report







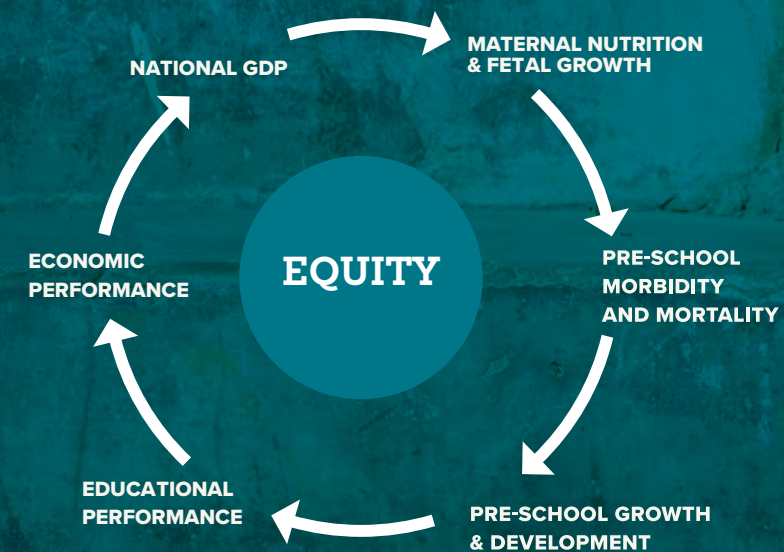
## About Vitamin Angels

Vitamin Angels helps at-risk populations in need—specifically pregnant women and children under five—gain access to life changing vitamins and minerals.

Founded in 1994, Vitamin Angels is a US-based, registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit working with over 2,500 program partners in 70 countries, including the U.S., to reach over 70 million pregnant women and children annually.

## Our Focus

Vitamin Angels generates resources to promote health and economic equity across the lifespan by ensuring nutritionally vulnerable, underserved populations have access to evidence-based nutrition interventions. We support evidence-based, cost-effective nutrition interventions that target the first 1,000 days of life (i.e., from conception to 24 months of age) and children up to 5 years of age in an effort to break the intergenerational cycle of undernutrition and bring about nutrition equity.





# Letter from the President

Vitamin Angels embarked on our biggest campaign to date, our Global Prenatal Initiative, in 2018. Things quickly started falling into place. It seemed like our timing could not have been better—the world was waiting for multiple micronutrient supplements (or MMS, commonly known as prenatal vitamins and minerals). We made tremendous strides. Over the course of 2019, our reach grew to even greater heights:

- Vitamin Angels grew our MMS program from reaching 2 million pregnant women to reaching more than 4 million women and children.
- We helped launch the first nationwide distributions of MMS in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Indonesia. We also supported over 20 state governments with MMS.
- We participated in and hosted symposia on MMS at major conferences like Women Deliver in Vancouver, BC, the Gates Foundation’s Goalkeepers Group during UN Week in NYC, the Asian Congress of Nutrition in Indonesia, and the SUN Global Gathering in Nepal.
- We have program partners in every state in the United States, and met 20% of the unmet need for MMS among low-income pregnant women.

While we made incredible strides with MMS, Vitamin Angels also continued to expand its reach with other nutrition interventions, reaching 70 million mothers and children in 70 countries globally.

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for the kindness, compassion, and commitment you’re showing to the babies, children, and women we’re reaching in the U.S. and around the world.

Upwards!



Howard B. Schiffer  
President & Founder / CEO





# The Problem:

## Nutrition Inequity & Undernutrition

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that at least half of the world’s population still lacks access to essential health services.<sup>i</sup> While many public health interventions have succeeded in historically closing coverage gaps up to 70%, gaps in service coverage remain largest in low- and middle-income countries and disproportionately affect the most nutritionally vulnerable.<sup>ii</sup> Millions of women and children remain unreached with essential health and nutrition services due to a variety of complex factors related to income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant to national contexts.<sup>iii</sup> The disproportionate allocation of health and nutrition services results in health inequities that lead to long-term adverse health outcomes, such as illness, stunting, wasting, preterm births, and death.

More than two billion people suffer from undernutrition, with the majority of individuals residing in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.<sup>iv</sup> Undernutrition is the #1 cause of preventable child death. The WHO and UNICEF recognize that malnutrition, specifically undernutrition, is estimated to be the underlying cause of nearly half of the deaths among children under 5 years of age – making it the most prevalent factor.<sup>vii</sup> In addition to children under 5, pregnant women are the most vulnerable to undernutrition caused by a lack of micronutrients.<sup>v</sup>

Various barriers exist that prevent individuals from accessing critical nutrition services. Key barriers include:



**Availability:**

Limited supply of product or healthcare providers



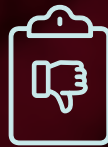
**Accessibility (Geographic):**

Services are too far away



**Affordability:**

Inability to pay costs, including product fees, appointment payments, and transportation costs



**Acceptability:**

Low trust of healthcare providers due to poor quality of care, discrimination, mistreatment, cultural insensitivity, etc.



**Awareness:**

Does not know about interventions or services



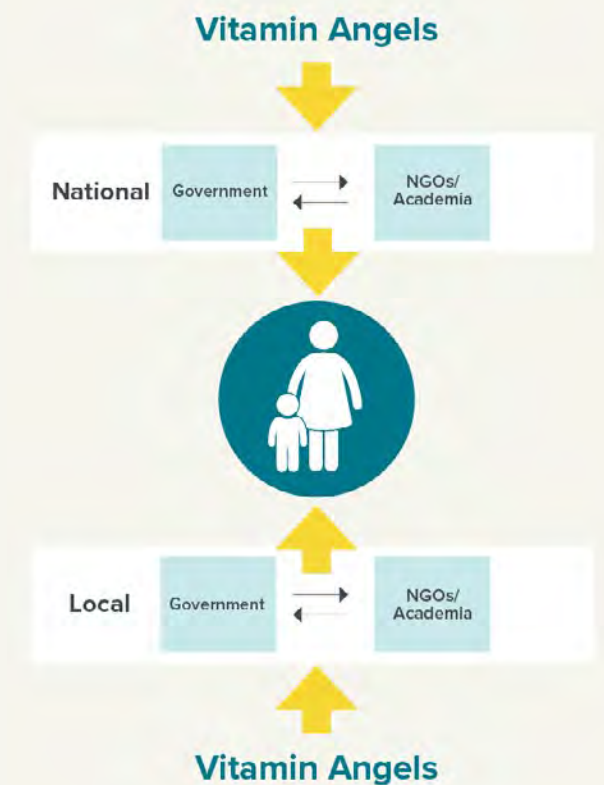




## Vitamin Angels' Model And Key Activities

VA partners with stakeholders (e.g. governments, academia, and non-governmental organizations) at both the national and local level, to:

- Engage in advocacy and advisory services to support an enabling environment which builds and sustains momentum for the initial uptake and ongoing use of evidence-based nutrition interventions,
- Provide technical assistance to ensure effective delivery of evidence-based nutrition interventions through implementation research, learning solutions, and monitoring and evaluation, and
- Increase the availability of evidence-based nutrition interventions to women and children. VA specifically focuses on ensuring access to a range of nutrition specific interventions including supplemental feeding, supplementation, combatting childhood infections, and promotion of optimal infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices.





# Advocacy & Advisory Services

In 2019, Vitamin Angels engaged in advocacy and advisory services at international, regional, and national levels in an effort to create an enabling environment for the introduction and implementation of evidence-based nutrition interventions, with a focus on multiple micronutrient supplementation (MMS) for pregnant women.

The use of prenatal MMS can result in significantly improved health of the mother and improved birth outcomes, including a reduction in maternal anemia, improved fetal growth and birth weight, a reduction in the condition known as small for gestational age (SGA) of newborn infants, and reduction in infant mortality.

Evidence from various trials substantiates that prenatal MMS (the UNIMMAP formulation) can have significant health benefits for mother and infant beyond the use iron folic acid alone. In 2018, VA launched a Global Prenatal Initiative (GPI) to advance access to prenatal MMS.

In an effort to create an enabling environment for MMS, VA assists global and local stakeholders in raising awareness of MMS, with a goal of: i) disseminating of MMS information, ii) gaining consensus on the evidence, iii) a recommendation for the adoption of an MMS policy, and iv) a plan to introduce MMS that is rooted in an understanding of the barriers and enablers to introduction and scaling.



## International Advocacy

In June 2019, VA co-sponsored and moderated a side event at the Women Deliver Conference, held in Vancouver, Canada, that brought together a panel of experts to discuss the global health problem of maternal undernutrition and the opportunity to improve the health of mothers and children through MMS during pregnancy.

Speakers from multiple public health nutrition organizations presented including individuals from academia, non-governmental organizations, foundations, and individuals that represented national-level perspectives.

## Regional Advocacy

In August 2019, in partnership with local universities, VA co-chaired a symposium at the Asian Congress of Nutrition (ACN) in Bali, Indonesia to update participants on MMS evidence, policy, and practice. Over 150 ACN participants attended the symposium, which not only raised awareness to MMS within the region, but created momentum within Indonesia for the convening of future expert meetings with the Ministry of Health, academia, and multilateral organizations.

## National Advocacy

Throughout 2019, VA also continued to provide technical advisory services to governments at national and local levels, as well as to NGOs and other members of civil society. Some noteworthy efforts from around the world include:

- Piloting a national program that integrates MMS into a newly launched national strategy for reducing infant and maternal mortality.
- Providing technical support toward the national implementation and scale-up of MMS.
- Facilitating technical consultations with relevant stakeholders on national MMS policy change, MMS introduction and adoption, and securing a national supply of MMS.



## Technical Assistance

Providing technical assistance to VA's program partners is essential in order to ensure effective and efficient program delivery through the following:

- **Implementation Research**
- **Learning Solutions**
- **Monitoring & Evaluation**

### Implementation Research:

VA conducts implementation research to ensure effective implementation of evidence-based nutrition interventions. Implementation research attempts to solve problems that often impede evidence-based interventions from having a public health impact under real world conditions. VA is partnering with multiple academic, government and NGO organizations to conduct implementation research.

The specific aims of the research include:

- Field test the provision of MMS, including the distribution platform, supply chain, and cost.
- Develop and field test social and behavior change communication (SBCC) strategies and tools intended to support the uptake and adherence of MMS among pregnant women.
- Identify and implement a methodology to evaluate coverage, and adherence of MMS among pregnant women.

In 2019, a comprehensive desk review was completed, which identified potential barriers and enablers of the daily adherence to supplementation during pregnancy, and considered other SBCC programs that have tried to increase adherence. This information informed the formative research, and included in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and an acceptability trial. The main objectives were to (i) understand the audience, (ii) understand barriers and enablers in relation to seeking antenatal care and to MMS uptake and adherence, and (iii) identify the channels through which behavior change messages could be delivered.

More information about this implementation research project and progress made will be published in 2020 by *Sight & Life*.







## Technical Assistance

### Learning Solutions:

VA's Learning Solutions Unit implements a continuous learning approach for the program partners and service providers we support. This approach is complemented with a "toolbox" of educational and training resources that provides learning solutions for different types of learnings across various contexts. This platform includes in-person instructor-led training options, eLearning and digital training options, performance support tools, and various digital and hardcopy educational materials. In 2019, VA trained thousands of service providers around the world on how to administer VA's evidence-based nutrition interventions.

### Monitoring & Evaluation:

VA's Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Unit manages rigorous data collection activities critical to improving the effectiveness of our program activities. VA implements three main data collection strategies:

- 1. Reporting**
- 2. On-site monitoring**
- 3. Coverage surveys**

#### 1. Reporting

VA collects annual distribution reports from 100% of program partners that include inventory reconciliation reporting by geographic location. Through this process, VA also collects documentation from program partners detailing their coordination with local government.

#### 2. On-Site Monitoring

VA conducts on-site monitoring visits among a random, representative sample of 20% of its program partners to validate that supported interventions are being delivered according to best practices.

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### Results from 2019 Monitoring

In 2019, monitors successfully visited program partners in 20 countries. While interventions were being conducted, monitors collected data to assess if program partners were: (i) implementing interventions according to best practices; (ii) reaching underserved and vulnerable populations with critical nutrition interventions; (iii) managing inventory and recordkeeping appropriately.

Results of monitoring visits indicate that program partners are supporting VA in its mission to effectively deliver evidence-based nutrition interventions to underserved populations.

On one of her monitoring trips last year, Dr. Luz Escubil, Country Manager in the Philippines, traveled for three hours in a caribou-drawn cart to visit the Palawan Nutrition Office and VA partner Agape Rural (Health) Program in Palawan Province. During the visit Dr. Escubil collected data, spoke with caregivers and the site servers and gave the partner recommendations on how to improve services to better serve women and children in need.



### 3. Coverage Surveys

In efforts to measure its impact, VA designs and conducts coverage surveys of its evidence-based interventions to confirm its programs are filling gaps in coverage, reaching vulnerable populations, and complementing the work of the government to improve coverage.

In 2019, VA partnered with a third party organization to conduct a coverage survey in India. Specific objectives of the coverage survey were: (i) to determine the coverage of vitamin A by VA partners and by the government, and (ii) to assess associations between socio-geographic characteristics and vitamin A coverage overall, by VA and the government.

A statewide household survey was conducted per WHO recommended Coverage Evaluation Survey (CES) guidelines. To determine the source of vitamin A supplementation, caregivers were asked if their child received vitamin A in the capsule form (VA supply) or the syrup form (government supply). In total, approximately 21% of children received vitamin A from Vitamin Angels and 52% received vitamin A from the government. Overall, this survey demonstrates that the NGO sector, in coordination with local government, can reduce gaps in vitamin A coverage, specifically in areas that are underserved.

## Reporting Our Impact

Vitamin Angels supports evidence-based interventions that are scientifically proven to have health impacts.

### Increasing access to evidence-based nutrition interventions among women and children leads to the following impact:

- reduction in morbidity (disease cases averted – infectious and chronic)
- reduction in mortality (lives saved)
- improved cognitive and social-emotional functioning
- improved academic performance
- increased earnings

Vitamin Angels collects data that verifies that evidence-based nutrition interventions are delivered effectively by monitoring outputs and outcomes, which allows Vitamin Angels to estimate impact.

Achieving this impact is an important step toward breaking the cycle of undernutrition which ultimately promotes health and economic equity across the lifespan for underserved populations.







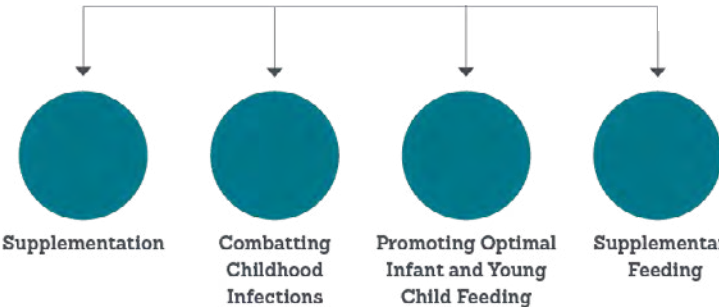
## Delivery of Evidence-Based Nutrition Interventions

Where gaps in nutrition programming coverage persist, VA supports the delivery of evidence-based nutrition interventions.

VA successfully increases access to evidence-based nutrition interventions and fills gaps in nutrition programming coverage through the power of partnerships. VA works with a broad network of program partners who provide intervention service delivery directly to pregnant women and children with support via the provision of product, training, and educational materials. VA's program partners include both governments at national, state, and local levels, as well as locally registered NGOs working with target communities.

### Vitamin Angels Interventions

Currently, we focus on the following areas where we can make the greatest impact:



### Program Reach

In 2019, VA reached approximately 70 million pregnant women and children with evidence-based nutrition interventions in 70 countries through a network of 2,500 program partners.

Vitamin A Alone	Vitamin A + Deworming	Deworming	MMS International	MMS US/ Canada
23,970,025	21,331,675	21,290,275	3,832,000	469,564



# Where We Work<sup>1</sup>

Afghanistan	Ethiopia	Malawi	Syrian Arab Republic	<b>US STATES</b>	Maine	Pennsylvania
Angola	Gambia	Mali	(Syria)	Alabama	Maryland	Rhode Island
Bangladesh	Ghana	Mexico	Thailand	Alaska	Massachusetts	South Carolina
Belize	Guatemala	Mongolia	Togo	Arizona	Michigan	South Dakota
Bolivia	Guinea	Myanmar	Uganda	Arkansas	Minnesota	Tennessee
Burkina Faso	Guyana	Nepal	Ukraine	California	Mississippi	Texas
Burundi	Haiti	Nicaragua	United Republic	Colorado	Missouri	Utah
Cambodia	Honduras	Nigeria	of Tanzania	Connecticut	Montana	Vermont
Cameroon	India	Palestine	US	Delaware	Nebraska	Virginia
Canada	Indonesia	Panama	Venezuela	Florida	Nevada	Washington
Central African Republic	Iraq	Papua New Guinea	Viet Nam	Georgia	New Hampshire	West Virginia
Colombia	Jordan	Paraguay	Yemen	Hawaii	New Jersey	Wisconsin
Côte d'Ivoire	Kenya	Peru	Zambia	Idaho	New Mexico	Wyoming
Democratic Republic	Lao People's	Philippines	Zimbabwe	Illinois	New York	
of Congo	Democratic Republic	Senegal		Indiana	North Carolina	
Dominican Republic	(Laos)	Sierra Leone		Iowa	North Dakota	
Ecuador	Lesotho	Somalia		Kansas	Ohio	
El Salvador	Liberia	South Africa		Kentucky	Oklahoma	
eSwatini	Madagascar	South Sudan		Louisiana	Oregon	



<sup>1</sup>Active” defined as: product shipped within the past 2 years meaning that product is in in country, being distributed, regardless of whether an actual shipment was received in that calendar year.



# Our Partnerships

At the core of VA's successes is the ability to unite and mobilize individuals, businesses, and organizations toward a common cause. It is thanks to our broad-based community of partners that all we do is possible.

## Corporate Partners

VA corporate partners achieved significant impact milestones in 2019. We extend our sincere thanks to each company listed below for its generous and unwavering support. Your outstanding contributions are helping improve the lives of millions of women and children worldwide.

\$5 Million+



\$1 Million+



\$250,000+



\$100,000+



\$50,000+



\$20,000+



## Partnership Offering

In the same way that our programmatic efforts are developed and implemented with expertise and care to most effectively fulfill our mission, we strategically create and engage in partnerships that can maximize the generation of resources to fund those efforts.

VA's partnership offering allows businesses to do more than charitable giving; purpose-driven companies appreciate a competitive advantage. Our expertise delivers business solutions in cause-marketing, employee engagement programming, and corporate social responsibility initiatives. Benefits of partnership include:

**Sales & Marketing Support:** Gain access to our passionate team and impactful, highly curated content, including customizable assets and more.

**Consumer Engagement:** Ability to leverage cause-marketing as a platform to showcase your values-driven approach, demonstrate impact, and increase customer loyalty.

**Employee Engagement:** Enhance employee recruitment as a purpose-driven company and foster retention by taking advantage of offerings tailored to your team's interests and skills.

**Contribution to the SDGs:** Exercise leadership in sustainability and ESG practices by driving meaningful impact on SDGs #1, #2, and #3.





Philanthropy Partners

We are grateful to our many philanthropic partners who have made grants and charitable gifts to support VA efforts to help expand and scale our reach, as well as support operational capacity building and program improvements.

2019 HIGHLIGHTS

GiveWell Grants for Global Health and Development in Southeast Asia and Bangladesh

In 2019, VA was a recipient of the 2019 GiveWell Grants for Global Health and Development in Southeast Asia and Bangladesh. The grant opportunity specifically supported organizations conducting programs that improve the lives of people in one or more of the following countries: Bangladesh, Cambodia, East Timor, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Vietnam. While VA operates programs in all 8 countries, VA’s application solicited support for our programs in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam. GiveWell granted only 3 awards, one of which went to VA in the amount of \$25,000.

USAID Ocean Freight Reimbursement Grant

In 2019, VA received a grant from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Ocean Freight Reimbursement Program to help cover some shipping and logistics costs associated with the delivery of evidenced-based nutrition interventions.

The Private Voluntary Organization (PVO) support program provides small competitive grants to approximately 50 U.S. PVOs each year. Funds are used to reimburse the PVOs’ costs to transport donated commodities to low- and middle-income countries.

Technical Partners

We take great pride in the technical veracity of our programs. Where we work, who we serve, which vitamins we distribute ... every detail down to the color, shape, and size of the capsules we distribute are determined with great care and the generous guidance of both international health and product manufacturing experts.

The following organizations provide invaluable technical support:

- World Health Organization
- UNICEF
- Children Without Worms
- STH Coalition
- Nutrition International
- DSM Nutritional Products
- Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
- Task Force on Multiple Micronutrient Supplementation in Pregnancy
- Sight & Life

2019 HIGHLIGHTS

2019 Global Summit

In March 2019, VA hosted its third bi-annual Global Summit in Santa Barbara, California, bringing together its US-based staff and international team of advisors for a week of collaboration. Team members from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, the Philippines, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and Uganda all came to the U.S. to discuss strategic plans and how to enhance the impact of VA’s programs around the world.

Board of Directors

- Clayton Ajello
- Robert Black
- Michelle Brooks
- Sutian Dong\*
- Michelle Goolsby
- Jim Hamilton
- Elizabeth Kimani-Murage
- Tom Meriam
- Carlyle Newell\*
- Howard Schiffer
- Brian Wood

Board of Advisors

- Jeff Brams
- Deanna Bratter\*
- Dave Brubaker
- Felicia Ciaccio\*
- Joanne Gray
- Peter Hefele
- Doug Henson
- Michelle Hobson\*
- Scott Holmes
- William Hood
- Doug Jones
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- Samantha Prasad
- John Petrovich\*
- Sara Snow
- Jill Staib
- James Tonkin
- Peter van Stolk

Honorary Board

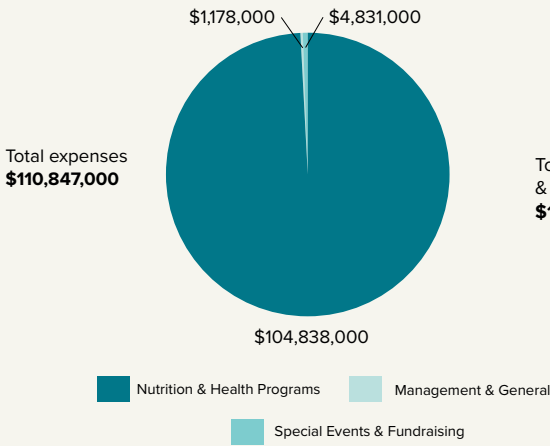
- Tom Aarts
- Elliot Balbert
- Jeff Markel

\*Member as of 2020.

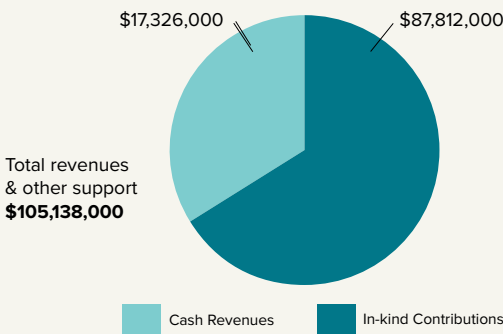
Financials

At the core of everything we do at Vitamin Angels, is the pervasive and persistent expectation that we operate at the highest level of performance with exceptional accountability and transparency. We hold ourselves to this standard to ensure we fulfill our obligation to those we serve and to all those who entrust us with their contributions.

How we use our funds:



Sources of operating revenue:



Audited financial statements and Form 990 available at: [vitaminangels.org/financials](https://vitaminangels.org/financials)

Recognition

As a public charity, VA takes great care to meticulously measure cost efficiency and responsibly manage funds to ensure optimum results in fulfilling our mission. At the same time, we strive to identify and deliver innovative solutions to serve nutritionally vulnerable populations. In 2019, we earned the following accolades for our efforts.





# Call for Support

As VA works to expand its efforts to generate resources to promote health and economic equity across the lifespan by ensuring nutritionally vulnerable, underserved populations have access to evidence-based nutrition interventions, continuing to marshal resources to support our work is critical. There are a few ways you can get involved and support our work.

## Program Partners:

Our Program Partners play a critical role in executing our mission. If you are involved with or know of an organization that may qualify to become a Program Partner, we kindly appreciate any referrals or introductions made. Find out if an organization qualifies for a partnership at our website: <https://www.vitaminangels.org/apply>

## Corporate Partnerships:

VA has a legacy of deep and meaningful relationships with corporate partners who exemplify upstanding citizenry and global leadership in the areas of health and wellness. Our corporate partners have critically empowered our work around the world, and in turn benefited from VA's robust provision of corporate social responsibility, cause marketing, and employee engagement solutions adding value to their business. To get started, contact [partnerships@vitaminangels.org](mailto:partnerships@vitaminangels.org).

## Grant-makers & Philanthropists:

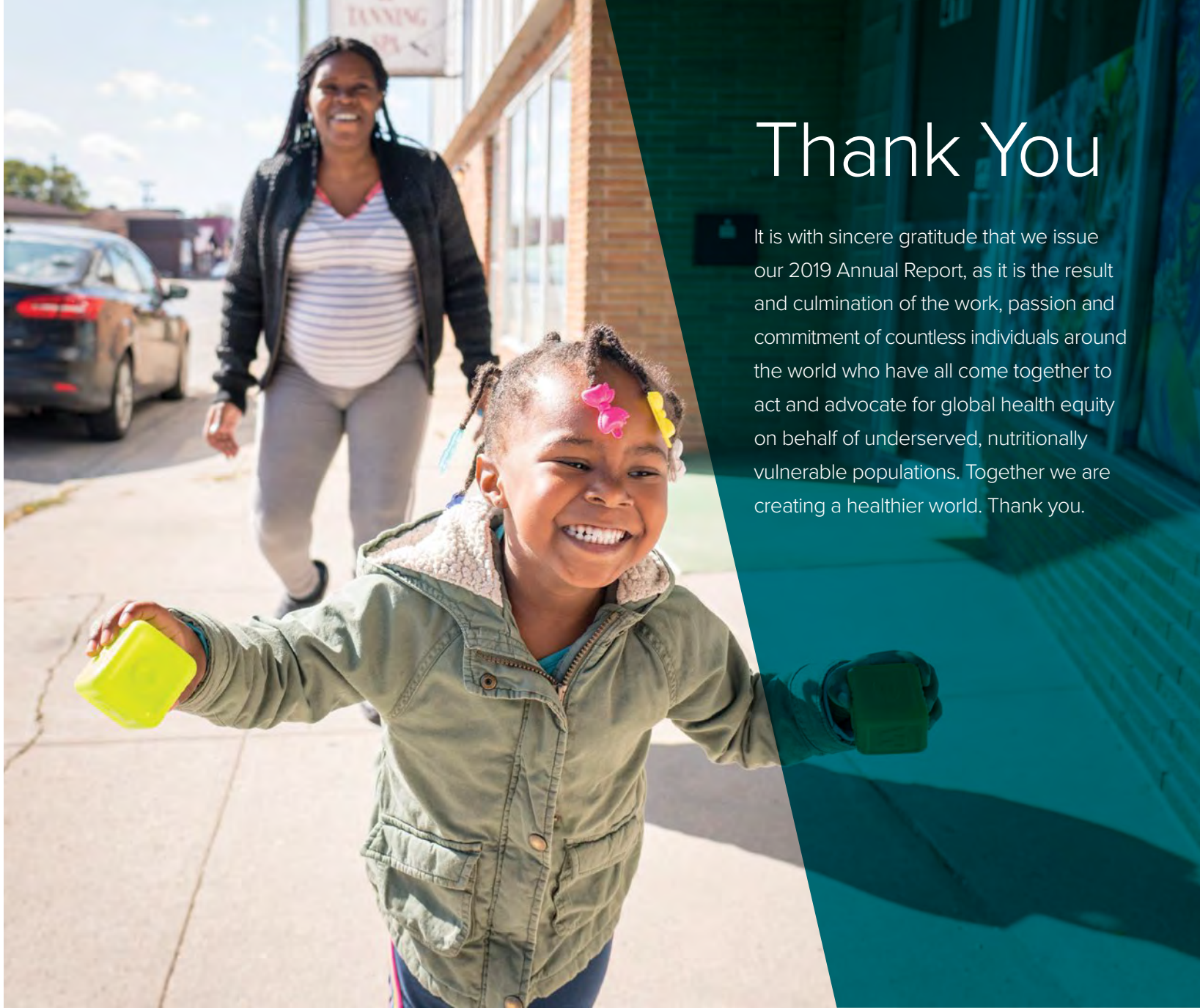
We are actively seeking partnerships with grant-making organizations and individual philanthropists in order to support targeted program efforts to fill gaps in coverage across our administrative priority countries as well as support capacity building through implementation research and operational projects.

## Individual Donations & Fundraising:

Enthusiasm and word of mouth are things that anyone, regardless of capacity to give financially, can contribute. Sharing VA's mission with friends and loved ones or starting a fundraiser are fantastic ways to make a meaningful impact.

# Thank You

It is with sincere gratitude that we issue our 2019 Annual Report, as it is the result and culmination of the work, passion and commitment of countless individuals around the world who have all come together to act and advocate for global health equity on behalf of underserved, nutritionally vulnerable populations. Together we are creating a healthier world. Thank you.



## References

- <sup>i</sup> World Bank and WHO: Half the world lacks access to essential health services, 100 million still pushed into extreme poverty because of health expenses. 2017. Retrieved from: <https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/13-12-2017-world-bank-and-who-half-the-world-lacks-access-to-essential-health-services-100-million-still-pushed-into-extreme-poverty-because-of-health-expenses#:~:text=At%20least%20half%20of%20the,the%20World%20Bank%20and%20WHO.&text=Currently%2C%20800%20million%20people%20spend,child%20or%20other%20family%20member.>
- <sup>ii</sup> Coverage at a Crossroads: New directions for vitamin A supplementation programs. UNICEF. May 2018. 2020 Global Nutrition Report. Retrieved from: <https://globalnutritionreport.org/reports/2020-global-nutrition-report/>
- <sup>iii</sup> "More than 2 billion people in the world today are estimated to be deficient in key vitamins and minerals, particularly vitamin A, iodine, iron and zinc." Preventing and controlling micronutrient deficiencies in populations affected by an emergency. Joint statement by the World Health Organization, the World Food Programme and the United Nations Children's Fund. 2006. AND "Hidden hunger, also known as micronutrient deficiencies, afflicts more than 2 billion individuals, or one in three people, globally." FAO. 2013. The State of Food and Agriculture. Rome. <http://bit.ly/KAn84>
- <sup>iv</sup> Preventing and controlling micronutrient deficiencies in populations affected by an emergency. WHO, WFP, UNICEF, March 2006. [http://www.unicef.org/nutrition/files/Joint\\_Statement\\_Micronutrients\\_March\\_2006.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/nutrition/files/Joint_Statement_Micronutrients_March_2006.pdf)
- <sup>v</sup> Peters DH, Garg A, Bloom G, Walker DG, Brieger WR, Rahman MH. Poverty and Access to Health Care in Developing Countries. Ann. N.Y. Acad. Sci. 1136: 161–171 (2008).





Vitamin Angels is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization, incorporated in the State of California and headquartered in in Goleta, CA.  
Tax ID 77-0485881

### Contact Us

**Vitamin Angels Office**  
6500 Hollister Ave.  
Suite 130  
Goleta, CA 93117

**Mailing Address**  
Post Office Box 4490  
Santa Barbara, CA 93140

Phone: 805.564.8400  
[info@vitaminangels.org](mailto:info@vitaminangels.org)  
[vitaminangels.org](http://vitaminangels.org)