



2020 Annual Report



vitamin angels

About Us

Vitamin Angels helps at-risk populations in need — specifically pregnant women, new mothers 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 reaching 60 million women and children in 65 countries through over 2,000 program partners.

What We Do

Vitamin Angels promotes health and economic equity across the lifespan by ensuring nutritionally vulnerable, underserved populations have access to evidence-based nutrition interventions. We target the first 1000 days of life (i.e., from conception to 24 months of age) and children up to 5 years of age.





Letter from the President

As a public health organization focused on health equity for the most nutritionally vulnerable worldwide, 2020 was a year unlike any other.

COVID-19 presented a public health crisis that extended across societal, economic, and cultural planes in our work and our lives. It exposed and exacerbated pre-existing inequities and put nutritionally vulnerable populations at even greater risk.

Adapting, innovating, and re-envisioning our approach so that our work could continue was imperative.

Amidst so much uncertainty, our commitment was steadfast and your support unwavering. Vitamin Angels’ community came together, and we’re stronger than ever because of the shared experience. In 2020, we reached 60 million women and children in 65 countries with essential nutrition interventions. We advocated at the local, national, and international levels for even wider-reaching systemic changes to improve access for everyone, everywhere. We learned, evolved, and implemented new systems and technologies that set our programs up for the long term.

Today, COVID-19 persists, as do the health and economic inequities implicit in our existence. We have a lot of work in front of us.

That work extends to the culture within our workplace as well. In 2020, Vitamin Angels turned the lens inward with a deliberate focus on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). In collaboration with a broad spectrum of team members, the organization developed and began implementing a plan to foster a workplace culture that reflects DEI values every day in our work.

Thank you for your continued support.

Howard B. Schiffer
President & Founder / CEO

I am pleased to reaffirm Vitamin Angels’ support of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment, and Anti-Corruption.

Our 2020 Annual Report serves as our Communication on Engagement with the UNGC. Within, we describe the actions Vitamin Angels is taking in support of the UNGC and its Principles as suggested for an organization like ours. We will also share this information with stakeholders through our primary communication channels. Vitamin Angels is committed to upholding the principles of the UNGC and assisting our valued corporate partners in achieving the SDGs.



THE PROBLEM:

Health Services Inequity & Undernutrition

The World Health Organization estimates that at least half of the world’s population still lacks access to essential health services. While historically, many public health interventions have succeeded in closing coverage gaps by up to 70%, gaps in service coverage remain largest in low- and middle-income countries and disproportionately affect the most nutritionally vulnerable.² Millions of children and women remain unreached with essential health services, including nutritional support, 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.³ This 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 2 billion people suffer from undernutrition, with the majority of individuals residing in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.⁴ The World Health Organization (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.⁵ In addition to children under 5, pregnant women are one of the populations most vulnerable to undernutrition caused by a lack of micronutrients.⁶



Various barriers exist that prevent individuals from accessing critical health and nutrition services.

KEY BARRIERS INCLUDE:



Availability:

Limited supply of product or staff



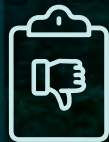
Accessibility (Geographic):

Services are too far away



Awareness:

Does not know about interventions or services⁷



Acceptability:

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



Affordability:

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

Vitamin Angels’ Model & Key Activities

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

- 1

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,
- 2

Provide technical assistance to ensure effective delivery of evidence-based nutrition interventions through learning solutions and monitoring and evaluation, and
- 3

Increase the availability of evidence-based nutrition interventions to women and children.

Vitamin Angels specifically focuses on ensuring access to a range of nutrition specific interventions including supplemental feeding, supplementation, combatting childhood infections, and promotion of maternal, infant, and young child nutrition (MIYCN.)

All of our work is underpinned by implementation science

Vitamin Angels applies an implementation science-based approach to facilitate the sustainable introduction (or strengthening) and scaling of evidence-based nutrition interventions. Implementation science allows us to solve problems that often impede interventions from having a public health impact under real world conditions.

As Vitamin Angels aspires to expand the offering and impact of our package of evidence-based nutrition interventions, we will continue to apply the principles of

- implementation science in order to:
- **Create awareness of new interventions,** build consensus among stakeholders for their introduction, and support the development of appropriate policies and program plans
 - **Design and test implementation strategies** to ensure accessibility, affordability, awareness, availability, acceptability, and equity of interventions as they are being introduced and scaled
 - **Assist health systems** in planning for the scaling of nutrition interventions



1

Advocacy & Advisory Services

Vitamin Angels engages in advocacy and advisory services at international and regional levels in an effort to create an enabling environment for the introduction and implementation of evidence-based nutrition interventions. In 2020, Vitamin Angels’ primary focus was on multiple micronutrient supplementation (MMS) for pregnant women, a relatively new evidence-based intervention.

The use of prenatal MMS can result in the significantly improved health of the mother and improved pregnancy 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, specifically the UNIMMAP formulation that Vitamin Angels follows, can have significant health benefits for the mother and infant beyond the use iron and folic acid alone.

In an effort to create an enabling environment for MMS, Vitamin Angels assists global and local stakeholders in raising awareness of MMS, with a goal of: i) disseminating 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.



Building Consensus for MMS

In 2020, Vitamin Angels organized and co-hosted global and national-level meetings and webinars to raise awareness: around the evidence supporting MMS; the 2020 update to the WHO’s Antenatal Care Guidelines; and, to the use of an implementation science approach to inform effective implementation.

January: Vitamin Angels sponsored the Indonesian Institute of Nutrition (IGI) to convene a group of experts, including participants from government, local universities, and international and local non-governmental organizations to generate consensus regarding the efficacy, safety, cost-effectiveness, and affordability of MMS use in Indonesia. Consensus was reached and the group identified the necessity of a formal recommendation in order to form a national MMS policy. The need for an Indonesian MMS Task Force to pursue the effort was also identified.

Following the expert meeting, Vitamin Angels sponsored a series of webinars hosted by the newly formed Indonesian MMS Task Force and IGI to address specific queries raised by government and key decision and policy makers related to creating a national policy and securing a local supply of UNIMMAP MMS.

April: Vitamin Angels presented during a Devex-hosted webinar “Improving Prenatal Nutrition: Making the Case for MMS.” This webinar brought together participants from both the public and private sectors to discuss the benefits of MMS compared to iron and folic acid supplements (IFAS) and how to scale up the use of MMS globally.

October: Vitamin Angels was proud to participate in the Micronutrient Forum 5th Annual Global Conference. Vitamin Angels’ staff presented posters and delivered presentations across multiple sessions relating to our range of nutrition interventions, though a large focus was placed on MMS.

Vitamin Angels’ MMS-Related Activities at Micronutrient Forum	
ON-DEMAND SESSIONS	POSTER PRESENTATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a Healthier Future: National Perspectives on the MMS Evidence Base and Policy Landscape • What’s Next for the MMS Movement: Implementing and Coordinating action on MMS Programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing uptake and adherence to ANC and prenatal supplementation among pregnant women in Haiti

Publishing Findings

In 2020, Vitamin Angels committed to publishing our work to raise awareness around the evidence for MMS and also to provide information to decision-makers and implementers interested in MMS.



***Sight and Life* Special Report: Focusing on Multiple Micronutrient Supplements**

Sight and Life provides scientists, health workers, and governmental and non-governmental agencies with educational resources focused on malnutrition.

This special report compiled evidence, firsthand experiences, and resources for MMS introduction and scale-up. Vitamin Angels authored articles including:

- Experiences Supporting the Introduction and Implementation of MMS for Pregnant Women Globally
- Ensuring Effective Implementation of Multiple Micronutrient Supplementation for Pregnant Women in Haiti
- Expert Consensus on an Open-Access Product Specification for MMS for Pregnant Women: A globally adaptable specification supplied to the public health nutrition programs



Emergency Nutrition Network (ENN) *Field Exchange*, Issue 63

Field Exchange is a technical publication used by international agencies to access and share relevant news and research relating to nutrition and food security. Vitamin Angels co-authored the article “Prevention of child wasting in Asia: Possible role for multiple micronutrient supplementation in pregnancy” to highlight the evidence supporting the transition from iron and folic acid to MMS, and three key phases in the process of adoption of MMS, using our MMS efforts in Indonesia as a case study.

Creating Tools

In 2020, Vitamin Angels developed resources to support the undertaking of systematic landscape analyses to identify barriers, constraints, and opportunities for integrating MMS into the antenatal care platform in the selected country, using a participatory approach.

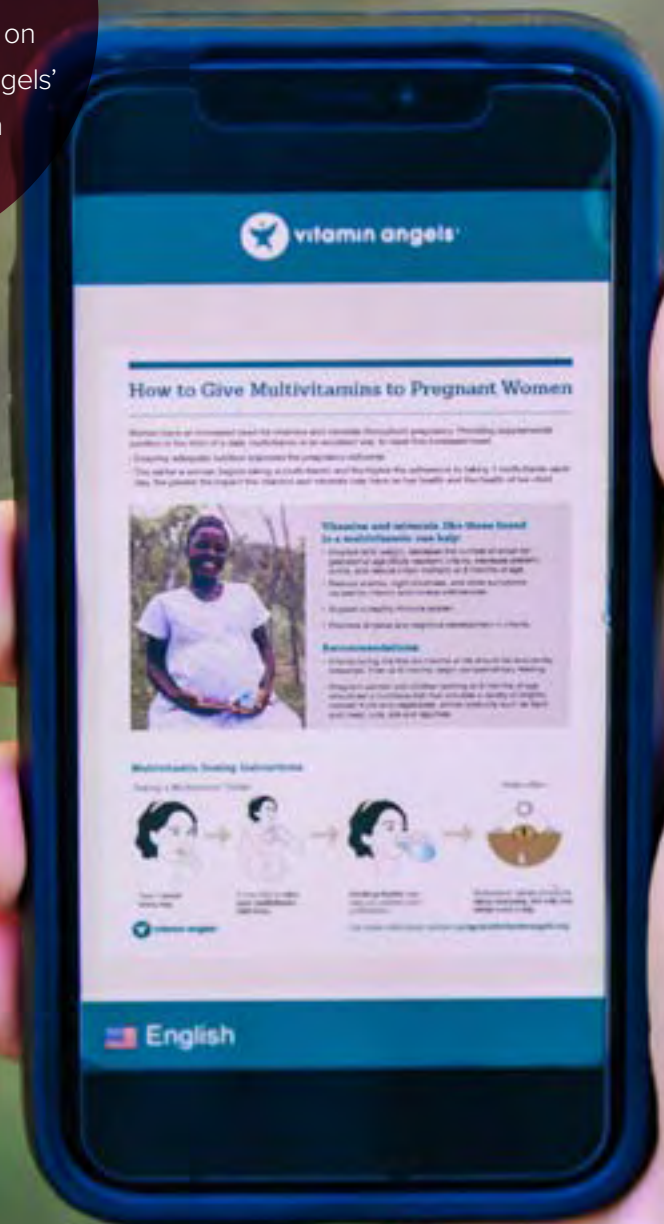
These resources included:

- MMS Landscape Analysis Guide, which describes the 5-step process for conducting the assessment
- Landscape Analysis Tool Package to support data collection

These resources will be used to systematically conduct landscape analyses in over eight countries in 2021 and will help inform future advocacy activities.



In 2020, Vitamin Angels used COVID-safe learning tools to train 10,000+ service providers around the world on how to administer Vitamin Angels' evidence-based nutrition interventions.



2

Technical Assistance

Providing technical assistance to Vitamin Angels' program partners is essential to ensure effective and efficient program delivery through the following:

- Learning Solutions
- Monitoring & Evaluation

Learning Solutions

Vitamin Angels' 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 tools that program partners can use according to various contexts, needs, and technological accessibility.

In 2020, Learning Solutions introduced the Vitamin Angels Mobile App, allowing program partners the ability to access learning tools directly on their smartphones and mobile devices. Though the app development began before COVID-19, its rollout at the beginning of the pandemic allowed program partners to continue learning without the need for an instructor-led course. The mobile app includes new interactive tools including practice case studies and a dosing calculator, as well as short, instructional videos, PDFs, and instructions on how to administer nutrition interventions according to COVID-19 safety guidelines.

Monitoring and Evaluation

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

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



Reporting

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

On-Site Monitoring

Vitamin Angels 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.

Coverage Surveys

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

While Vitamin Angels was not able complete any coverage surveys in 2020, it focused on revising its M&E framework and prepping for surveys in 2021.



Reporting Our Impact

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

Results from 2020 Monitoring

Travel restrictions due to COVID-19 limited the number of visits monitors were able to complete in 2020. 24 monitors successfully visited 66 program partners in 9 countries, reaching 64% of the target. While interventions were being conducted, monitors collected data to assess if program partners were:

- 1) implementing interventions according to best practices,
- 2) reaching underserved and eligible women and children with critical nutrition interventions,
- 3) managing inventory and keeping records effectively. Results of monitoring visits indicate that program partners are supporting Vitamin Angels in its mission to effectively deliver evidence-based nutrition interventions to underserved populations.

3

Delivery of Evidence-Based Nutrition Interventions

Vitamin Angels supports evidence-based nutrition interventions that are scientifically proven to have health impacts. Increasing access to these 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 academic performance
- Increased economic performance

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



Program Reach

In 2020, Vitamin Angels reached over 60 million children and pregnant women with evidence-based nutrition interventions, in 65 countries through a network of 2,000+ program partners.

OVER 60 MILLION REACHED

Vitamin A Alone
25,979,350

Vitamin A + Deworming
15,456,875

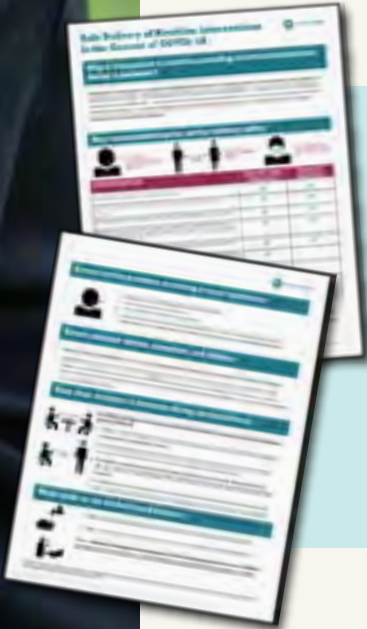
Deworming Alone
14,840,325

MMS International
3,533,526

MMS US/Canada
493,112

Delivering Essential Nutrition Amid A Pandemic

The disruption to food and health systems brought about by COVID-19 brought an increased need for nutritional support for pregnant women and young children, however, the risk of transmission required intervention delivery to be modified. To protect our program partners and their clients, Vitamin Angels distributed guidelines for the safe delivery of nutrition interventions in the context of COVID-19.





COVID-19, Our Work Continues

The COVID-19 pandemic presented extraordinary challenges in continuing efforts toward our mission. At the same time, the impact of the pandemic has only exacerbated the need for improved access to health and nutrition services for underserved populations. In response, our global community has risen to the challenge; we have seen unparalleled acts of bravery, kindness, and resilience.

Additionally, Vitamin Angels introduced the Healthy Futures Initiative to meet the expanding needs associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Special thanks to all of the generous contributors.



Increasing Advocacy and Resources for prenatal vitamins & minerals (MMS) to combat high food insecurity and the increased risk of malnutrition for pregnant women.



Responding to a Growing Need for vitamin A to fill gaps in coverage caused by disrupted systems which can leave children vulnerable to illness and infection.



Expanding Digital Tools for program partners to efficiently train more service providers that can support currently overwhelmed health systems.

Program Partner Response

Globally, our program partners adapted their efforts safely continue their work and to the meet immediate and emerging needs of the communities they reach. Photos courtesy of our partners.

“When we were closed due to COVID-19, we were trying to ‘think outside the box’ to continue serving our patients. We set up a drive-through resource distribution [system] using our Mobile Medical Unit. Patients would call us from the car and we would run supplies out to them. Our medical office continued to provide pregnancy testing, ultrasounds, and [prenatal multi] vitamins to our patients. [Recently,] we resumed services at the resource center. We are essential!”

— **Pregnancy Care Center of the North Coast, USA**



“We have seen evidence in our communities that COVID-19 is causing a rise in women giving birth at home, instances of gender-based violence, hunger, and economic fragility. We’ve seen that women and girls are among the most at-risk during this pandemic. Complying with government regulations, our community health workers are distributing birthing kits, prenatal multivitamins (multiple micronutrient supplements – MMS), and face masks to local hospitals to protect pregnant women and ensure they can give birth safely.”

— **S.O.U.L. Foundation, Uganda**

“We are working rapidly to stabilize the spread; along with community education and implementing social distancing measures. NuDay has been sewing and distributing face masks (to combat the lack of personal protective equipment), installing wells for better hygiene efforts, distributing food and hygiene baskets, and building standalone shelters for families. We are remaining positive, albeit realistic, that the spread will be contained. The donation of vitamin A, albendazole, and MMS from Vitamin Angels is a relief in these darker times, ensuring that the health needs of women and children (who are overwhelmingly impacted) are being met — so thank you.”

— **NuDay, Syria**



Where We Work

Afghanistan	Colombia	Guatemala	Lesotho	Panama	Syrian Arab Republic
Angola	Cote D'Ivoire	Guinea	Liberia	Papua New Guinea	(Syria)
Belize	Democratic Republic	Guyana	Madagascar	Paraguay	Tanzania
Bolivia	of the Congo	Haiti	Malawi	Peru	Thailand
Burkina Faso	Dominican Republic	Honduras	Mali	Philippines	Togo
Burundi	Ecuador	India	Mexico	Rwanda	Uganda
Cambodia	El Salvador	Indonesia	Myanmar	Senegal	United Kingdom
Cameroon	Eswatini	Jamaica	Nepal	Sierra Leone	United States
Canada	Ethiopia	Jordan	Nicaragua	Somalia	Venezuela
Central African Republic	The Gambia	Kenya	Nigeria	South Africa	Vietnam
Chad	Ghana	Latvia	Palestine	South Sudan	Zambia
					Zimbabwe



'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 Vitamin Angels’ success 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.

Program Partners

Vitamin Angels would not be able to make the global impact we do today without our large and diverse network of program partners to deliver our nutrition interventions. These local health service providers are trusted members of their communities and in 2020, many played a critical role in educating and protecting their communities from COVID-19.

Technical Partners

We take great pride in the technical veracity of our programs. Where we work, who we serve, which nutrition interventions we provide ... 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 provided invaluable technical support to Vitamin Angels in 2020:

- 1000 Days
 - AIIMS - All India Institute of Medical Science
 - Airlangga University
 - Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
 - Centre for Health Research and Development, Society for Applied Studies
 - Children Without Worms
 - Global mHealth Initiative
 - Haitian Ministry of Public Health and Population
 - Hasanuddin University
 - Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
 - Khaitan & Co
 - Kirk Humanitarian
 - Micronutrient Forum
 - Ministerio de Salud Publica – Ecuador
- Nutrition Center of The Philippines
 - NYAS
 - PDG Communications
 - Sight & Life
 - STH Coalition
 - Task Force on Multiple Micronutrient Supplementation in Pregnancy
 - TorranceLearning
 - Trusted Legal
 - UNICEF
 - Universitas Gadjah Mada
 - University of Indonesia
 - USP
 - World Vision



Philanthropy Partners

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

USAID Ocean Freight Reimbursement Grant

In 2019, Vitamin Angels 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. In 2020, Vitamin Angels received additional funding to further support these activities.

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.

Our Partnerships

Corporate Partners

Vitamin Angels corporate partners made significant financial commitments to the health of women and children in 2020. We extend our sincere thanks to each company listed below for its generous and unwavering support. These financial contributions helped protect the health of millions of women and children worldwide.

\$5 Million+









\$1 Million+







\$250,000+















\$100,000+







\$50,000+

























\$20,000+

























































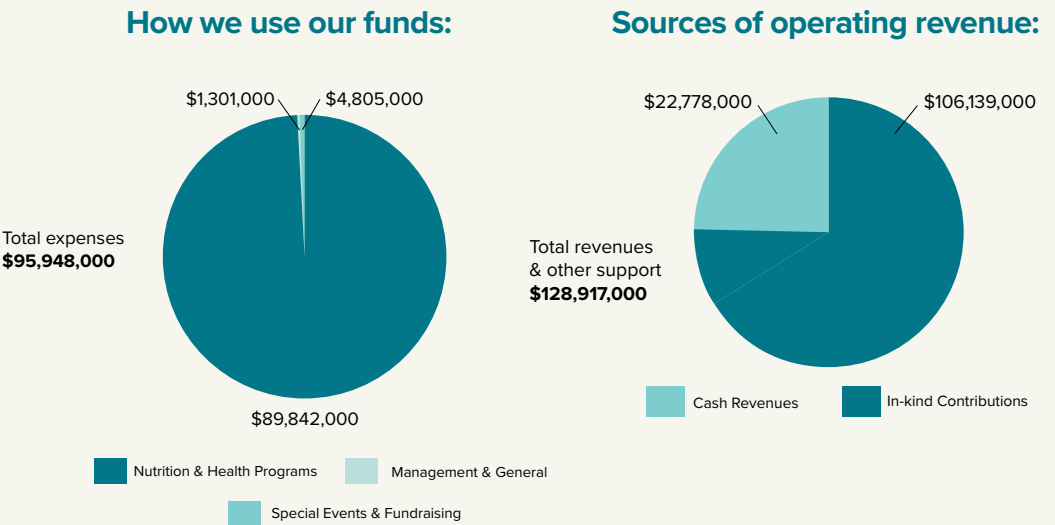






Financials

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.



Call for Support

Vitamin Angels is working to expand its global reach to support the health of nutritionally vulnerable, underserved populations. Here are a few ways you can get involved to advance 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: vitaminangels.org/apply

Corporate Partnerships:

Vitamin Angels 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 Vitamin Angels’ robust provision of corporate social responsibility, cause marketing, and employee engagement solutions adding value to their business. Contact us to get started at 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 beneficiary 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 Vitamin Angels’ 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 2020 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 create a healthier world. Thank you.



References

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⁶“Children under five and pregnant and breastfeeding mothers are the most vulnerable to hidden hunger. In order to support a child’s rapidly developing body and mind, a regular supply of nutritious foods is vital.” 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

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¹World 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-millionstill-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>

ⁱⁱCoverage 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/>

ⁱⁱⁱ“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>

^{iv}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

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

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