

The Worm Project

Combating World Hunger Through Parasite Removal

Newsletter

Issue No. 24 Summer 2023

The Worm Project Free Benefit Banquet



Photo © Vitamin Angels – Sophia Billikopf SV16

6:00 pm Saturday, Oct 21

Franconia Heritage Restaurant
508 Harleysville Pike, Telford Pa

Keynote speaker:

Howard Schiffer, President & Founder of Vitamin Angels

THE MEAL IS FREE
but donations will be accepted.

For reservations, contact us with your name and number of people:

E-mail: info@wormproject.org or

Phone: 267-932-6050 Ext. 201

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED – no later than October 15

Ethiopia: Parasitic Worms Are a Serious Health Issue

Infographic © Vitamin Angels

Photo © Vitamin Angels – Basilio Sepe PH23

Editor's Note: The Worm Project donates millions of Albendazole Tablets (deworming medicine) to Vitamin Angels each year. With our partnership spanning 20 years, The Worm Project appreciates Vitamin Angels focus on the most vulnerable, children under age 5 in poor communities that are underserved by existing systems.

Of the 20 diseases included on the WHO list of neglected tropical diseases, soil-transmitted helminths or parasitic worms are one of the most prevalent. Parasitic worms are considered neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) because they inflict tremendous disability and suffering yet can be controlled or eliminated. The infection rates are particularly high in sub-Saharan Africa, which has some of the highest recorded rates of parasitic worm infections globally. Ethiopia is one of the most impacted countries in the region. A host of socioeconomic factors contribute to high infection rates in Ethiopia, including one of the world's lowest quality drinking water supply and latrine coverage. One study estimated that nearly half of the school children tested in one region in Ethiopia

(continued on page 2...)

were infected with at least one parasitic worm. Other research indicates that parasitic worm infections are the second most predominant cause of outpatient illness in Ethiopia. Parasitic worm infections have a pronounced impact on children in their formative years of development and can leave children nutritionally and physically impaired. Extraordinary physical and cognitive development takes place in children under age 5, and young children infected with parasitic worms at this age are particularly susceptible to the damage resulting from undernutrition. Deworming is known to be a highly cost-effective public health intervention. Administering Albendazole, an anti-parasitic, helps ensure optimal child health and nutrition. Giving children a chance at a healthier life sets them up for developmental and economic success throughout their lifetime. The Worm Project has supported Vitamin Angels' deworming work in Ethiopia since Vitamin Angels began distributing Albendazole there in 2016. Since then, Vitamin Angels has distributed over 45 million doses of Albendazole for children under age 5. While attending a recent

playing with her friends, does chores, and her appetite is back. As I listened to Zenebech's story, I couldn't help but feel inspired. This simple act of administering Albendazole had made such a big difference in her life, her daughter's life, her family's life and represents the impact we've made in the lives of so many.



Guatemala: Addressing High Rates of Parasitic Worm Infections

Photos © Vitamin Angels – Marie Arago GT23



Parasitic worm infections are among the most common infections worldwide and impact an estimated 1.5 billion people globally, or 24% of the world's population. Parasitic worm infections impact low-income and low-resource communities that lack access to clean water, and some of the highest infection rates are reported in South and Central

(continued on page 3...)



distribution, I met a woman named Zenebech. Zenebech was there with her daughter, Elshaday, who had just taken her third dose of Albendazole. Zenebech expressed tremendous enthusiasm and gratitude for the impact we're making in her

community and the transformation she had witnessed in Elshaday's health as a result of the medicine we provided.

Zenebech told me that prior to the medication, her daughter had a lot of distress in her belly. She noted that she had been underweight since early childhood, used to cry a lot, had no appetite, had a bloated belly, and had diarrhea often. Zenebech talked about going to the local health center to get her daughter help, but there she found no solution. They even took a loan from a money lender and asked for contributions from friends and family so they could seek medical treatment at the local hospital but nothing helped until she came to our distribution.

Zenebech says, thanks to Albendazole, her daughter is now enjoying a healthy life. She goes to school, spends time

America. Parasitic worm infections can lead to malnutrition, general malaise and weakness, and impaired growth and physical development.

Guatemala is a multicultural country with 44% of its inhabitants being indigenous Mayan. The country is mountainous, with remote towns and villages spread across its high and lowlands. Two-thirds of its population lives on less than \$2 (USD) per day, and among indigenous people, poverty averages 80%—leading to deprivation in multiple aspects, including food security, nutrition, health, and education.



High rates of parasitic worm infection, coupled with issues of food access and security, contribute to stunting and, in Guatemala, 46.5% of children under age 5 have stunted

growth. The prevalence of stunting in children under age 5 in Guatemala is one of the highest in the world—and the highest in Latin America and the Caribbean. While 46.5% represents the national average annually, stunting rates reach 70% in some regions, with peaks as high as 90% in the most impacted areas.



Vitamin Angels works with local organizations in Guatemala that are committed to reducing the burden of parasitic worms. Through these partnerships, Vitamin Angels offers access to the critical deworming treatment, Albendazole, as well as training for program partner's service providers for safe and effective administration, and monitoring tools to enable tracking and evaluation. The shared goal of The Worm Project and Vitamin Angels ensures we are working collaboratively to eradicate parasitic worm infections in the most underserved areas globally. In Guatemala alone, we have distributed 257,500 doses of Albendazole since we launched our partnership.

Worm Project Walk Fundraiser

May 20, 2023

**Franconia
Community Park**

Photos: Jason Sprunger

Thank you for coming out to walk on a drizzly Saturday morning and learning more about The Worm Project.



Thank You to Our Business Sponsors



Dr. Clarence Freed
Plastic Surgery

The Worm Project: What we do:

The Worm Project buys medicine to treat children infected with parasitic worms in the poorest countries of the world.

- Over 800 million children (roughly 1/4 of the world's children) are at risk of being infected with parasitic worms
 - Parasitic worms cause physical and cognitive impairment in children due to malnutrition
- The Worm Project purchased and distributed deworming medicine to treat over 10 million children in 2022.
- Each deworming tablet costs less than 3 cents and treats one child for parasitic worms
 - One tablet kills virtually all the worms living in children
 - Medicine is extremely effective and safe
- All-volunteer Christian organization is extremely cost effective
 - Expenses are extremely low
 - Donations are tax deductible

*"... Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."
(Matthew 25:40 NIV)*



Board of Directors

Gary Delp – President
Jeff Hollenbach – Vice President
Jason Sprunger – Secretary
James Yothers
Floyd Kratz
Ceci Good
Robert Rutt
Rita Hoover
Madeline Clemens

Contact Us

Web: wormproject.org
Email: Info@wormproject.org
Phone: (267) 932.6050 Ext. 201



You Can Help!

Charitable donations can be made by check or on our website at wormproject.org. Just click on the **donate** button.

Please consider making a tax exempt donation from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA)

Checks should be made payable to:
The Worm Project
and sent to:

The Worm Project
Mosaic Mennonite Conference
1000 Forty Foot Road, Suite 100
Lansdale, PA 19446