

NEW COLLABORATION: FILLING CRITICAL GAPS IN COMBATTING SOIL-TRANSMITTED HELMINTHS

Soil-transmitted helminths (STH) are one of the most common parasitic infections in children. Globally, approximately 870 million children are at risk of infection with intestinal worms, or STH, which include roundworm, hookworm and whipworm. STH can cause “silent suffering,” leading to impaired growth and nutrition, decreased cognitive function and anemia.

The global community has the tools needed to reach children at risk and to work toward the elimination of STH. As part of the 2012 London Declaration, Johnson & Johnson and GlaxoSmithKline extended their existing donations of deworming treatments (benzimidazoles) annually through 2020. This commitment, estimated at more than 4 billion doses from 2014-2020, is enough to cover every school-aged child in need of treatment.

Despite these ongoing commitments, only 30 percent of children worldwide received these treatments in 2012. More needs to be done to ensure that safe and effective deworming treatment can reach children in need and achieve the World Health Organization target of reaching 75 percent of children with STH treatment.

In response to this need, 9 organizations agreed to bring the resources and drive needed to fill critical gaps in STH prevention and treatment. These organizations committed more than US\$120 million to scale up deworming efforts, catalyze country demand for treatment and develop new tools and strategies for exploring the possibility of introducing elimination in the future. By working hand in hand, the group will:

Catalyze demand for donated drugs and scale sustainable country-led programs



***Children’s Investment Fund Foundation** will contribute \$50 million to fund technical assistance to national deworming programs, including improved monitoring and evaluation and operational research aimed at exploring the possibility of elimination beyond 2020.*

***Dubai Cares** will design programs that will integrate nutrition, WASH, and deworming interventions in schools to increase student enrollment and learning outcomes.*

***Mundo Sano** will dedicate US\$4 million over five years to test strategies in partnership with local governments for deworming and combination treatments, particularly in the Americas.*

***Vitamin Angels** will contribute \$4.5 million to scale up deworming with vitamin A distributions and provide implementation support through local partners to eligible pre-school children.*

Facilitate collaboration and coordination across sectors



***The Global Partnership for Education (GPE)** will assist governments in low-income countries to improve health and learning outcomes of children and help the education sector deliver deworming treatments to children.*

***The World Bank** will use the opportunity presented by the GPE initiative to make International Development Association (IDA) educational resources available for school-based deworming—opening up a new funding stream.*

***WaterAid** will work with education, nutrition and health stakeholders nationally and globally to ensure their plans contribute to STH elimination.*

***The World Food Programme** will work to ensure deworming is provided to millions of children as part of current school feeding programmes.*

Develop and test a feasible strategy to block transmission



***The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** will commit \$50 million to explore the feasibility of blocking transmission and mitigating the risks of drug resistance, as well as helping build the evidence base for effective cross-sector approaches.*