Attachment A - GiveWell's recent progress and future plans
November 11, 2019

What is GiveWell's mission?

GiveWell's mission is to find outstanding giving opportunities and publish the full details of our analysis to help donors decide where to give.

We accomplish our mission by finding the most cost-effective giving opportunities we can and directing as much money as possible to those recommendations (our money moved).

Note: if we meaningfully expand our work on influence (the third bullet below), we'll probably want to revise our mission statement.

What are our major areas of growth?

In the next few years, we aim to increase our impact by:

- **Finding more cost-effective giving opportunities.** We aim to evaluate opportunities that go beyond the scope of the types of charities GiveWell has evaluated to date (more in this blog post). This area is still new for us and the goal we have in mind is intended to communicate our direction; it's likely that we revise our goal as we learn more about this area. Currently, our goal is, by the end of 2022, direct at least $25 million per year to opportunities that we believe are significantly more cost-effective than the top charity we would have otherwise directed funds to or conclude that the areas we're exploring are likely less cost-effective than our top charities (or not sufficiently more cost-effective to be worth the effort of exploring this new area).
- **Increasing money moved.** Our goal is to reach $100 million money moved (excluding Good Ventures) by the end of giving season 2022 (i.e., January 31, 2023).

- **Influencing institutional funders of global health and development.** We are exploring the possibility of influencing the giving of donor-governments, large foundations, and multilateral institutions (e.g., the World Bank, Global Fund). This area is new and we're uncertain about what constitute reasonable goals. We are currently thinking about goals like, within 5 years, direct at least $100 million to GiveWell's priority programs or improve the cost-effectiveness of $500 million in institutional funding by at least 2x.

What constitutes success?

- If we achieve none of these goals, we would consider that a failure.
- If we achieve one of these goals, we consider that to be on expectations and a significant improvement in GiveWell's overall impact.
- If we achieve two or more of these goals, we would consider that to be an exceptional improvement in GiveWell's overall impact.

How are we working to achieve these goals?

My (Elie's) top priorities are:

- **Recruiting researchers and managing/training newly hired senior researchers who can contribute at a senior level, either as individual contributors or managers**. This is currently our biggest bottleneck to achieving our research goals. I also believe that more senior researchers will meaningfully support our outreach goals by (a) conducting/leading outreach-oriented research projects, (b) improving our transparency, and (c) improving how we demonstrate / communicate about the quality of our work.
- **Leading our efforts to increase money moved.** I'm going to be onboarding and managing key new hire(s) and existing hires focused on acquiring new donors and retaining and upselling people who've given before.
- **Exploring institutional influence as a potential long-term priority for GiveWell.** I've been managing this work (more below).

What have we done recently to move towards these goals? How have we progressed?

- **Recruiting researchers.**
    - We recruited and onboarded three researchers this year, two of whom are mid-career, and whom we hope become senior research contributors in the near future; We also added an entry level researcher. We aimed to add 3-5 researchers in 2019; so, this was consistent with our expectations.
    - We are now participating in the American Economic Association job market for students who expect to receive their PhDs in economics in 2020. Based on past

experience , we believe that people with PhDs in economics are well-suited to the research work we do. We are participating more aggressively in this job market than in the past, and we plan to adjust our application process (based on feedback we sought out this past year) to make it more amenable to the students we're targeting.
- ○ Next, we plan to more aggressively solicit individual referrals from people who work in global health and development.
- **Money moved.** We've done three things to contribute to this goal in 2019:
  - ○ **Ran a search for and hired a VP Marketing**.
  - ○ **We executed some small projects aiming to acquire $1-2 million in additional money moved in 2019.** We don't expect to hit our goal; we'll know for sure once giving season finishes. We updated our homepage, aiming to increase our conversion rate; we're advertising on more targeted podcasts which we expect to have higher ROI than last year's ads on larger podcasts. We are working to improve donor-to-donor referrals. We believe that all this work has improved the conversion rate of donors who visit our website by approximately 0.2 percentage points, driving ~$100,000+ additionally already. We haven't yet tried to model the impacts of these improvements. We don't have robust estimates for the dollar impact of the other growth work but would guess it will net an additional $100,000-200,000 in money moved this year.
  - ○ **We improved our donor follow up efforts aiming to move an additional $1-2 million from existing donors.** This primarily involves asking certain donors to increase their giving. We expect to successfully move approximately $2 million this year due to these retention-focused efforts.
- **Influence.**
  - ○ In June, we hired a senior staff member to focus full-time on influence-oriented work.

What else of note is happening at GiveWell?

Here are some additional areas worth highlighting:

- **Organizational strengthening.** Operations led efforts to strengthen GiveWell as an organization, focusing primarily on HR-oriented areas. This included:
  - ○ An anonymous staff morale and engagement survey, the summary of which we shared with the Board for this meeting.
    - ■ As a result of this survey, we're planning to overhaul our approach to performance reviews in 2020.
  - ○ An effort to draft a set of GiveWell's core values, which we've shared with the Board for this meeting.
  - ○ A committee that will focus on improving the diversity of GiveWell's staff.

The latter two initiatives were started before the staff survey but address some of the main feedback that came through in the survey.

- **Strengthening the top charities team.** We continued to make progress in defining roles and responsibilities on the top charities team.
    - We now have staff in relatively defined roles focusing on (a) costing and room for more funding analysis and (b) updates to the evidence for interventions we recommend . We're working with newer staff to see if they will develop into other roles, including (c) owner of top charity relationships and (d) cost-effectiveness model owner.
    - Previously (as of earlier this year), the top charity function was more capacity constrained which led to (a) more disruption of the priorities of other researchers (when they were pulled into work this team was doing) and (b) the risk of disruption if an individual staff member left.
    - We still need to improve our staffing for reviewing new interventions and charities. We're in the midst of thinking through how we'll staff those functions.

- **Increasing attention to blog.** We shifted a senior research analyst away from primarily focusing on donor relations (i.e., 1:1 meetings and calls with donors) to primarily focusing on writing/blogging. This shift is new -- it began in mid-September -- but we expect it to result in significantly more blogging about our research.

- **Research transparency.** We have not made progress in addressing our past failure to publish our research at a reasonable pace (more [here](#)). We'll address this once we've made more progress in recruiting and onboarding senior researchers. I believe that our recruiting success in 2019 will make progress on this more likely in 2020.

- **New areas of research.** We made progress on new areas of research in early 2019, identifying several promising areas within public health regulation: lead paint regulation, alcohol, micronutrients in India, and ambient air pollution. This work slowed dramatically since July when we reorganized our research team, which slowed our progress overall, in particular on researching giving opportunities in public health regulation.