

Conversation between Elie Hassenfeld (GiveWell) and Alissa Fishbane (Managing Director, Deworm the World) on November 2, 2012.

Note: This is a summary compiled by GiveWell of the major points made by Ms. Fishbane in our conversation.

Summary

In 2012, Deworm the World successfully raised funds for its work around the world but now projects a 2013 funding gap of \$695,000 for the Bihar deworming program. We discussed the program, its funding needs and possible sources of funding.

Full notes

Deworm the World's current funding gap

For 2013, we have a funding gap in Bihar; we've raised funds to cover all of our other work. We break our total gap of \$695,000 into 3 categories:

- \$415,000: to support the Bihar program (i.e, technical assistance, operational and coordination support, and monitoring and evaluation), targeting 21 million school-age children.
- \$150,000: to carry out a follow-up parasitological survey.
- \$130,000: to expand the program to the pre-schoolers. This would leverage the full-time team already on the ground. There are 6 million children in Bihar in this age group.

Bihar program history

The program was launched in 2011, and reached over 17 million school-age children. A second round was implemented in September 2012, and results will be available in a few months once reports from over 67,000 schools are collated. Given the high prevalence in Bihar, we expect that several rounds will be needed to sufficiently reduce worm loads.

Other potential funders

We've talked with a number of donors. Partially it's the Goldilocks story in terms of matching donors with programs. (For some donors this program is "too hot" and for others "too cold.") The (current and potential) donors we've spoken with have various reasons for why it is not a good fit for them; for example, for some it's too rural or too small a funding gap, and for others they are looking to support specific states or countries.

CIFF: The Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF), a major supporter of ours in other areas, typically provides grants that are much larger than current need. We are beginning to explore with them, for the longer term, the possibility of supporting Bihar as part of a plan to support programs in multiple states. However, this will take time to work through and we are still in the exploratory phase. In the meantime, we need to continue to work to fill the gap and

support Bihar plans to sustain the program.

Individuals: On average, we receive about \$150,000 in website donations each year from individuals. This funding makes a real difference in supporting deworming but it's not enough to fund the full program.

Other sources: In early 2012, we also faced a funding gap for 2012 work in Bihar, and we were able to raise this money. We needed to raise \$415,000 (because last year we didn't need to raise funds for a follow-up survey, and we weren't aiming to expand the program to pre-schoolers). We raised money via the Young Global Leaders of the World Economic Forum, but this isn't something we expect to repeat every year. We were also able to raise some money via direct fundraising.

Our goal is to have a long-term, more reliable funding stream for this program. This is such a critical program, and it's stressful, time consuming and risky to have to raise funds each year.

What happens if Deworm the World isn't able to raise the \$695,000 it targets?

First, we wouldn't be able to start the preschool program. Next, we wouldn't be able to do the follow-up survey. The Bihar program is so important because there are so many kids with so many worms. Last year, we made a decision that we'd continue working up until we just didn't have funds to do it anymore because we felt that we had to make it happen. We were lucky to pull through with the money.

Again, we're trying to stretch it as far as we can with the resources we have, but we'd have to make tough decisions about how to proceed. We were fortunate not to make too many tough decisions last year.

Some decisions might be:

- Can we fill in all of the program gaps: e.g., pay for all printing costs so that teachers have the appropriate amount of campaign materials?
- Can we afford to place a coordinator in each district, and/or hire the 100+ monitors required to rigorously evaluate program processes and coverage?

Those are the types of expenses we would need to make a call on. We could move forward without them but they have a huge impact on making sure the program is being implemented appropriately and maximizing coverage. For example, the coordinators and monitors provide vital feedback as the program is rolling out, such as which schools have not received drugs on time, and take the appropriate steps to ensure essential components such as this are in place

Information about Deworm the World's track record, i.e., monitoring and evaluation data from past programs

We have monitoring and evaluation data on program coverage and processes (which we will send over shortly), but we don't yet have any available follow-up parasitological data since these

programs have only completed their first or second years. Many donors fund follow-up parasitological surveys according to WHO guidelines, which state that at least two years of deworming is typically needed to measure progress. The Kenya program, which is funded by CIFF, will soon have annual parasitological data: 3 surveys over 5 years and pre- and post-data done every year.

We have built additional rigorous program coverage monitoring into every program round to validate that the number of kids dewormed matches program reports. It is a less expensive way to measure program impact and ensure children are being treated systematically across the program. As long as the pills are effective, then we can reasonably expect that children taking them and the broader community will have lower infection rates than before the intervention. Typically when people do follow up parasitological data every year, they're only able to look at a few sites, which provide an indication of impact but are not statistically representative of what's going on across the national program. We use a statistically representative sample where we do our coverage validation process with kids to determine whether each has taken the deworming pill. We've worked with the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab at MIT (J-PAL) to test various instruments aimed at getting accurate results from kids, i.e., did she take the pill or not when deworming happened? We have monitors go to a number of randomly chosen schools, and J-PAL helps us set up rigorous samples.

We're working to improve our data capacity so we can turn around results even faster. We had previously outsourced our data analysis to J-PAL; and now as we're growing we are also hiring more people to work on data internally. We will have results from Delhi's first round very soon, and Rajasthan in the coming months as they just implemented last month. Kenya might have interim results to share during your visit, but final results won't be available until after they finish their first round in February.