

Research meeting
August 8, 2013

Vitamin A (Howie)

We are continuing our research on vitamin A supplementation, focusing on the question of how to reconcile the results of the 2010 Cochrane meta-analysis, which found large reductions in child mortality, and the DEVTA study, which did not find statistically significant effects on child mortality. We are investigating various explanations of this discrepancy, including that the VAS program in DEVTA was poorly run, and that other health improvements (especially reductions in diarrhea, measles, and vitamin A deficiency) may have reduced the effectiveness of VAS over time.

Vitamin Angels (Tim)

GiveWell is investigating Vitamin Angels as a potential top charity.

Staff discussed the status of this investigation and what GiveWell's expectations for transparency should be regarding potential top charities.

Geoengineering research (Alexander)

Alexander attended a conference in Boston as part of GiveWell's investigation of the cause of geoengineering research (see: <http://www.givewell.org/shallow/geoengineering>). The conference was interdisciplinary, drawing economists, climate scientists, and social scientists, among others. One takeaway from the conference was that there seemed to be a consensus that the field of geoengineering research is very small, and that it would need to grow and diversify significantly to be able to answer some important questions. Our next step for geoengineering research is to continue looking for potential consultants who could conduct a deeper investigation in this area.

All research meeting notes available at <http://www.givewell.org/research-meetings>