

Helen Keller Intl

Helen Keller Intl's Vitamin A Supplementation programs provide critical nutrition to children around the world at risk for vitamin A deficiency, a condition that can lead to blindness and death.

Their annual demonstrated impact includes:

- Supporting 388,000 families with education and tools to grow, prepare, and sell vitamin A-rich foods.
- Providing 32 million children under the age of 5 with two doses of vitamin A.

Donations above \$2 **tax-deductible**. See our global [tax-deductibility options here](#).

DONATE (CREDIT CARD)

Credit card donations attract a service fee

OTHER WAYS TO DONATE

Avoid fees - see our other ways to donate

Key Strengths: Evidence, Scale

Multidimensional Poverty Index Indicators: Nutrition

Other Key Outcomes: Disease burden, Child development

Recent Expense Budget: US\$111,000,000

Year Founded: 1915

140M

children are vitamin A deficient

100K

children die annually from VAD-related causes

A vitamin A supplement costs

US\$1.23

to deliver

Other ways to donate

We recommend that gifts up to \$1,000 be made online by credit card. If you are giving more than \$1,000, please consider one of these alternatives.

CHEQUE

BANK TRANSFER

STOCKS OR SHARES

PAYROLL / WORKPLACE GIVING

BEQUESTS

The problem: vitamin A deficiency

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), vitamin A deficiency (VAD) is the leading cause of preventable blindness in children, and increases the risk of disease and death from severe infections. It also contributes to other severe health issues, including stunting and anemia. VAD is common in poor regions around the world — particularly in Africa and Southeast Asia — as a result of diets low in vitamin A-rich foods. [\[1\]](#)

Oral vitamin A supplementation can prevent child blindness and reduce mortality by 12–24% and only costs US\$1.23 per supplement.



The solution: oral vitamin A supplementation — also known as VAS

Oral vitamin A supplementation is “the most widely practiced approach to addressing VAD in most high-risk countries.” It involves providing children ages 6 months to 5 years with high-dose vitamin A supplements two or three times a year. WHO claims this type of supplementation can prevent blindness and reduce mortality for children in this age range by 12–24% and is extremely cost-effective: only about US\$1.23 per supplement. [\[2\]](#) [\[3\]](#)

US\$1.23 per supplement. [4][5]

How Helen Keller Intl's Vitamin A Supplementation programs work

According to WHO, almost 50% of children in Africa and South Asia are vitamin A deficient — that's nearly 180 million children. [4] An estimated 100,000 children die each year from VAD-related causes. [5]

Helen Keller Intl (HKI) is a longtime leader in combating VAD and its life-threatening effects with successful VAS programs across the globe. In close partnership with national governments, local organisations, and international partners, HKI helps facilitate mass vitamin A supplements to children who need it. In many countries, HKI is the lead NGO (non-governmental organisation) partner responsible for supporting VAS programs.

An estimated 100,000 children die each year from VAD-related causes.



HKI's VAS programs deliver nutritional supplements to children under 5 in a variety of ways, including the use of mass campaigns (such as National Immunisation Days and Child Health Days) designed to integrate vitamin A supplementation into broader health campaigns that address multiple public health issues simultaneously.

What makes Helen Keller Intl so effective

Cost-effectiveness

VAS is considered by the World Bank to be one of the most cost-effective ways to save lives. Each supplement costs about US\$1.23 to distribute. [\[6\]](#)

Far-reaching impact

Treating vitamin A deficiency in children ages 6 months to 5 years reduces all-cause mortality for that age group by 23%, measles mortality by 50%, and diarrheal disease mortality by 33%. [\[7\]](#)

Helen Keller Intl's accountability and transparency

Rigorous charity evaluator GiveWell commends HKI's accountability and transparency, noting that their self-evaluation is strong compared to the vast majority of organizations, and that they share significant, detailed information about their programs. [\[8\]](#)

Recognition for Helen Keller Intl

Based on its VAS programs, HKI has been selected as a Top Charity by GiveWell and is considered a four-star charity by Charity Navigator. HKI is also the proud recipient of the 2014 Henry R. Kravis Prize in Leadership. [\[9\]](#)

SOURCES

All photos and videos courtesy of Helen Keller Intl

[1] World Health Organization, [Micronutrient deficiencies](#)

[2] World Health Organization,
[Global prevalence of vitamin A deficiency in populations at risk 1995–2005](#)

- [3] World Health Organization,
Vitamin A supplementation for preventing morbidity and mortality in children from 6 months to 5 years of age
- [4] World Health Organization, Micronutrient deficiencies
- [5] The Lancet,
Trends and mortality effects of vitamin A deficiency in children in 138 low-income and middle-income countries between
1991 and 2013: a pooled analysis of population-based surveys
- [6] GiveWell's review of Helen Keller Intl's Vitamin A Supplementation Program
- [7] World Health Organization, Distribution of vitamin A during national immunization days
- [8] GiveWell's review of Helen Keller Intl's Vitamin A Supplementation Program
- [9] Kravis Prize, 2014 Recipient
- [10] GiveWell's review of Helen Keller Intl's Vitamin A Supplementation Program
- [11] Helen Keller Intl website