

MAMA News

March - April 2012



MAMA Project

Mujeres Amigas-Miles Apart
(Women Friends-Miles Apart)

- Nutritional Rehabilitation
- Medical & Dental Brigades
- Work Teams
- Preschools
- Cross Cultural Training
- Deworming & Vitamin A Campaigns
- Donating Medical & Dental Equipment & Supplies
- Community Development
- Scholarships
- Child Survival Training

MAMA News is a bimonthly newsletter that provides updates about MAMA Project, Inc.'s programs and service to communities in Honduras, Haiti, and Nigeria.

The MAMA News is available for free to anyone who would like to receive it.

To add, remove or change your address on our mailing list, contact:

Amanda Sagastume
MAMA Project, Inc.
2781A Geryville Pike
Pennsburg, PA 18073
(215)679-4338
mamaproject@enter.net
www.MAMAPROJECT.org

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All photos were taken by MAMA Project Staff or Service Team Members.



Vitamin A Distributions

In this issue of "MAMA News", we will continue our reflections of the past 25 years of work in Child Survival. For the first article, please see our January - February MAMA News available for download at www.mamaproject.org/archive.html

Vitamin A Deficiency (VAD) is a serious public health problem in many developing countries. It affects millions of women and children worldwide and is the leading cause of preventable blindness in children. About 250,000 to 500,000 children become blind every year due to VAD and half of those children die within a year of becoming blind.

In children, VAD compromises the immune system, increasing the risk of severe illness and death from serious infectious diseases such as diarrhea, pneumonia, measles and malaria. Therefore, lack of vitamin A leads to poor tissue integrity with results in lack of growth and slow healing.

Because of the seriousness of VAD, from the beginning, MAMA volunteers were involved in distributing vitamin A capsules as part of their brigades.

This simple, small capsule given to children ages 6 to 60 months can help prevent VAD.



This child is blind due to a Vitamin A deficiency.

After seeing cases of VAD in the poor communities of Honduras, MAMA Project decided they needed to intervene more with the Honduran Ministry of Health and the need for vitamin A.

From 1990 to 1992 MAMA developed a vitamin A study and promoted the distribution of vitamin A capsules on a regional and national scale. MAMA worked alongside the Honduran Ministry of Health as they started the production of vitaminized sugar. The sugar (with vitamin A) is sold throughout Honduras to this day.



In the early days of MAMA, volunteers are pictured giving capsules of vitamin A to children.



Deworming Campaigns

Intestinal parasites, also called "soil transmitted helminths" are the most common infection worldwide. The prevalence rates of intestinal parasite infections in some resource poor communities can be over 90%. An estimated 2 billion people are infected with worms, and 300 million suffer severe impairments because of high worm burdens. Intestinal parasites are caused by environmental contamination by human and animal waste.

Intestinal parasites are a major contributor to morbidity and mortality in developing countries, predisposing the host to:

- Anemia
- Malnutrition
- Impairment of physical growth - both stunting and wasting
- Poor intellectual development

Deworming promotes child survival. Therefore, national deworming campaigns have become standard in many developing countries. One tablet of deworming medicine, usually Albendazole, at a cost of \$0.02, is given every 6 months according to standardized protocols. It is easy, effective in controlling the worm burden, and usually very well accepted on the community level.

Knowing how simple it is to reduce the number of intestinal parasites and, therefore, improving the overall health (physical and mental) of a child, MAMA Project decided to encourage a National Deworming Campaign in Honduras. After several years of planning and having discussions with the Honduran Ministry of Health, in 2009 the First Lady of Honduras held a National Deworming Campaign in addition to handing out her healthy snacks at schools across the country. The 2 million Albendazole tablets were donated by MAMA Project and another organization, Worm Project, and were



given to 1 million children (2 doses). In 2010 and 2011 another 1.5 million Albendazole tablets were distributed with the "Healthy Schools Program" and other organizations, including MAMA Project's brigades. Currently MAMA Project is working with the new government leaders to continue this program in 2012.

In 2011, 1 million Albendazole tablets were also distributed in Nigeria through government leaders. These deworming tablets were given to children in schools.

Deworming is also another important part of MAMA's medical brigades in Honduras and Haiti. Every person that comes to the brigade is given a chewable Albendazole tablet. Not only is it getting rid of the intestinal parasites, but also the education given of how to keep them out of your bodies is also important. As shown on the right, MAMA Staff give a short explanation in the beginning of a brigade about the importance of washing hands and using clean water to eat and drink. Each community that we visit is given a home water filtration system to be used by all.



Do you want to join us in our Vitamin A and Deworming Distributions?



Your donation can help us to continue these campaigns in Honduras, Haiti, and Nigeria!



The Front Porch

By Debbie Barker

The aroma drifting from Isabel's kitchen mingles with smoke from the village cooking fires. It clings to the warm evening air on The Front Porch of MAMA's mission house in San Francisco de Yojoa, Honduras where mission team members gather after a good day's work. Dogs bark, roosters crow, birds sing and the sound of music from the village mixes with stories and laughter. The construction and medical team members mingle. They relax, share, pray, write, reflect, read, plan and joke together here throughout the evening.

For the visiting mission team members, this is the place where relaxation begins, where stories are told, friendships are made and nourished, where all that happens throughout the day is processed and enjoyed. Here is where a visitor will hear the statistics of the day; how many bags of cement were mixed, how many families will be sleeping on their new cement floors that night, how many Hondurans living in distant mountain villages are enjoying their new reading glasses or were able to visit the doctor or dentist that day. This is where experiences are first re-lived. The medical team talks about villages from the view of villagers' health and well being. The construction team discusses living conditions and family structure. There is always a story about villagers who stood out from the crowd. His hard work helping out, her beautiful smile, the laughter of a group of women getting their finger nails painted, a man with a chronic medical condition, a child identified as malnourished, a young mother and her many children. Village conditions, problems and accomplishments are shared, connections are made: this village had a good supply of livestock, that one has spring water piped house to house, today we saw a lot of villagers with respiratory problems and no



outdoor cooking stoves, few had chimneys. An eaves-dropper will surely hear stories of the day's travels to and from the remote vil-lages, the scenes passed, the roads covered, the accomplishments of the brave drivers, the praise of grateful passengers.

Pictured on the left is the

See Debbie's complete reflection at www.mamaproject.org/archive.html

Dr. Benner Awarded the Mennonite Peace Mug

Bob Moyer introduced Dr. Benner at the Peace & Justice Conference in February 2012. Bob is a member of the Peace and Justice Committee, representing the Franconia Mennonite Conference

The Peace and Justice Support Network (PJSN) of Mennonite Church USA encourages congregational and conference peace committees to affirm and promote the work of peace and justice in our area by honoring someone with a lifelong commitment to peace and justice by awarding them a peace mug.

Peace and Justice groups can call for nominations from their membership, asking for persons who:

- have been involved in peace and justice work for a long period of time,
- have worked at educating, advocating, organizing for peace, justice, reconciliation and community building,
- have modeled a Christian lifestyle of peace and justice,
- have been a founder or leader of a church or community peace and justice organization,
- and should be publicly recognized for their ongoing work.

The awarding of the mug will not only honor those who have worked long and hard in peace and justice, but will serve to encourage others to continue in their local and global work.

Dr. Benner says, "Hunger is real, and it is tragic. Sometimes we cannot help but witness its glaring horror; sometimes it is a hidden misery. But it is never necessary, and it is 100% curable. When we ask God why he allows children to starve, when he has the power in Heaven to end suffering everywhere in the world, his answer may be 'Why do you allow children to starve when you have the resources on Earth to end hunger?'"

This year the Peace Mug is awarded to Dr. Priscilla Benner.



Becky Felton, right, presented Dr. Benner, left, with the Peace Mug.

MAMA Project's 5th Annual Spring Golf Outing

Butter Valley Golf Port
www.buttervalley.com
South 5th St
Bally, PA

Friday, June 8, 2012

7:30AM Registration
8:00AM Shotgun Start

Players' Fee includes greens fee,
golf cart, mid-round food, goody
bag, buffet lunch, and a chance
at prizes.

*Please call Amanda at
215-679-4338 with any questions.



Registration Form

Return this form to MAMA Project by June 1, 2012.

Enclosed is a check for the
total amount of \$_____ for:

Name: _____

_____ Player(s) @\$100 each

Company Name: _____

_____ Hole(s) @\$250
(one player included)

Phone: _____

_____ Event Sponsor @\$1,200
(foursome included)

Email: _____

_____ Lunch Guest @\$10 each

Payments must be included with
registration form.
For event or hole sponsors, please
include a business card.

Please make checks payable to
MAMA Project.