

Evidence based impact of National Deworming Day

October 21, 2020

In news

Fourteen states report reduction in worm prevalence

Key highlights

- Since its launch in 2015, the National Deworming Day (NDD), a flagship program of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, **is implemented as a biannual single day programme** implemented through the platforms of schools and anganwadis.
- **Albendazole tablet**, approved by the WHO, is used for treatment of intestinal worms in children and adolescents as part of Mass Drug Administration (MDA) programmes globally.
- According to the WHO Report on STH published in 2012, in India there were an estimated 64% children in the age group (1-14 years) at risk of STH.
- The risk was estimated based on the hygiene and sanitation practices and limited STH prevalence data at that point of time.
- To assess the exact burden of STH in India, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare appointed the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) as the nodal agency to coordinate and conduct nationwide baseline STH mapping.
- In collaboration with partners and government agencies, NCDC completed the baseline STH mapping across the country by the end of 2016.
- The data showed varied prevalence ranging from 12.5 % in Madhya Pradesh to 85% in Tamil Nadu.
- To evaluate the impact of the consistently implemented high coverage NDD programme, the Health Ministry

recently initiated follow-up prevalence surveys led by NCDC and partners.

- They were guided by the High Level Scientific Committee (HLSC) appointed by the Ministry.
- As on date, the follow-up surveys are completed in 14 States.
- **All 14 States have shown reduction in the follow up survey compared to the baseline prevalence survey** and the State of Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Telangana, Tripura, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar have shown substantial reduction in worm prevalence in the STH follow up prevalence survey.

What is Soil-Transmitted Helminthiases (STH)?

- STH, also known as parasitic intestinal worm infection, is a significant public health concern mostly in low resource settings.
- These are known to have detrimental effects on children's physical growth and well being and can cause anemia and under-nutrition.
- Regular deworming as advised by the WHO eliminates worm infestation among children and adolescents living in areas with high STH burden, thereby contributing to achieve better nutrition and health.

Implementation of NDD

- It is led by the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**, in collaboration with the **Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Education** and technical assistance from WHO and the technical partners