Parallel Session 30
Endemic infectious diseases: Making the case for investing in health promotion

Vector-borne and neglected tropical diseases in Sri Lanka: a case study

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Introducing Sri Lanka

- **Warm, wet climate**: 6 - 10° N of equator, 2 annual monsoons
- **Population**: about 21 million in 2015
- **Lower-middle income**: per capita GNI of US$3,836 in 2015
- **High literacy rates with gender equity**:
  - Males – 94.2%; Females – 92.6% (2014)
- **Good health indices**:
  - Infant mortality rate: 8.2 per 1000 live births (2013)
  - Life expectancy at birth: 74.9 years (2014)
VBDs and NTDs in Sri Lanka

- **Historically endemic for:** malaria, Japanese encephalitis, lymphatic filariasis, dengue, chikungunya, leishmaniasis, leprosy, rabies, soil-transmitted helminths

- Reached WHO elimination targets for
  - Leprosy (1995)
  - Lymphatic filariasis (2016)
  - Malaria (2016)
Success against leprosy

- During the period 1990 – 1995, national prevalence dropped from nearly 8 per 10,000 population to below 1 per 10,000 population (i.e., met the WHO definition for elimination as a public health problem)

- Main reason for success: changing public perception of leprosy - broad-based, professional advertising campaign that portrayed leprosy as just another treatable disease, and motivated people to seek early treatment
Success against lymphatic filariasis

• Many different aspects to reaching goal of eliminating LF as a public health problem: political, technical, financial and social

• High compliance with annual Mass Drug Administration programmes was critical: driven by Public Health Midwives and local volunteers, supported by intense social mobilization using Communication for Behavioural Impact (COMBI) strategy
Success against malaria

• No indigenous cases of malaria since 2012
• Again, many different contributors to success in interrupting transmission
• Community engagement and health education have been key to enabling
  – early diagnosis and treatment,
  – vector control activities
  – sustained surveillance
Role of schools

• Concepts of disease, disease-causing pathogens and vectors of disease introduced in primary school
• School children learn about importance of personal hygiene, sanitation and environmental cleanliness
• School health programme provides anthelmintics for intestinal worms, in addition to mid-day meals and nutritional supplements to those in need
Endemic infectious diseases and the Sustainable Development Goals
Ending endemic infectious diseases is an integral part of good health and well-being

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<th>By 2030, <strong>end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases</strong> and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases</th>
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<td>3.8</td>
<td><strong>Achieve universal health coverage</strong>, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all</td>
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National Health and Family Planning Commission
of the People’s Republic of China

World Health Organization
Ending NTDs strengthens health systems for the poorest and most marginalized beyond peripheral health facilities

Yaws Eradication Programme in India

- Yaws eradication required Information, Education and Communication (IEC) programmes for community mobilization, and active search for cases in the most remote parts of the country
Ending NTDs improves school attendance and educational outcomes

- Children line up for de-worming tablets during national deworming day in India in February 2016.

- School-based delivery of anthelminthics is one of the most cost-effective interventions to boost school attendance and performance.
Thank you