

Helminth control in school-age children

A guide for managers of control programmes

Second edition



WHO Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data:

Helminth control in school age children: a guide for managers of control programmes - 2nd ed.

1. Helminthiasis - prevention and control 2. Helminthiasis - drug therapy. 3. Schistosomiasis - prevention and control 4. Schistosomiasis - drug therapy. 5. Helminths - growth and development. 6. Anthelmintics - therapeutic use. 7. Child. 8. National health programs - organization and administration 9. Guidelines. I. World Health Organization.

ISBN 978 92 4 154826 7 (NLM classification: WC 800)

First edition, 2002 Seconedition, 2011

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Printed in France

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Planning

Deworming school-age children should be conceived as a part of a larger national strategy for the integrated control and elimination of NTDs. Deworming activities should therefore be planned, implemented and monitored in coordination with other NTD control activities.

Implementation

The participation of the community from the start of the planning phase is a key factor in the success of the control programme. Since improving children's health is the objective of the control activity, communities are normally supportive in ensuring the necessary logistic support, providing additional practical information and helping to underpin the long-term sustainability of the programme.

Monitoring and evaluation 36

WHO sees monitoring and evaluation as an integral component of any control programme, essential to ensuring both efficient implementation and maximal benefit for infected individuals, their families and communities.

Collection of epidemiological data in sentinel sites

From the start of any control programme, a system must be established for the periodic collection of parasitological data for monitoring purposes. One of the most efficient methods of collecting epidemiological data is to use sentinel sites.

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Preface

Helminth control in school-age children • Second edition

IN 2001, THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY,

with Resolution 54.19, set the global target of treatment of 75% of school-age children (usually defined as children between 5 and 14 years) at risk for schistosomiasis and soil-transmitted helminth (STH) infections by 2010. WHO estimates that more than 200 million school-age children were treated worldwide in 2009.

The purpose of this book is to offer guidance to planners and programme managers in the health and education sectors with responsibility for these control programmes and to provide encouragement to those who will be instrumental in achieving this global target.

The school-based control of schistosomiasis and STH infections is of proven cost effectiveness. This book describes an approach in which epidemiological data are used to select the control strategy to be applied to the school-age population and shows how periodic data collection from sentinel sites can be used to monitor the progress of control activities.

The first edition of this book was published in 2002. This second edition incorporates more recent experience and lessons learnt from school-based control programmes in several countries not previously reported. It also includes references to web sites where useful information is available.

The book is intended to help managers plan, implement and monitor programmes for deworming school-age children using methods based on the best current evidence and experience. It covers the following topics:

 A summary of the relevant health risks caused by schistosomiasis and STH infections, modes of transmission of the infections and public health measures that can be applied to control the risks.

- Guiding principles for school health programme design and budgeting, including details of procurement of drugs and other materials and of the organization of training activities.
- Guiding principles for the implementation of school health programmes, including logistics management in the school system, the administration of deworming drugs to the children and the management of adverse events.
- Suggestion for the integration of schistosomiasis and STH control activities with onchocerciasis and filariasis control/elimination programmes in the context of the national control of neglected tropical diseases.
- The most useful indicators for monitoring and evaluating the progress of the programme, including guidelines for the collection of epidemiological data and for reducing the frequency of drug administration.

WHO is currently supporting endemic countries in preparing integrated plans for control of neglected tropical diseases in which these aspects are considered. Managers of control programmes should contact WHO's Department of Control of Neglected Tropical Diseases (see list of useful addresses in *Annex 1*) for support and for information about integrated control.

Control and the sustainable interruption of transmission will depend on the successful implementation of deworming programmes and on intersectoral collaboration to improve basic hygiene and living conditions.

Nine examples from existing school health programmes are presented to illustrate specific aspects of the deworming intervention. This book is a source of guidance; regional and national factors will influence the actual control strategies to be implemented; the illustrative examples are a means of sharing practical and specific experience.

Acknowledgements

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THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION WOULD LIKE

to express special thanks to all those who contributed to the production of this manual.

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Thanks are due to the following people for their contributions, suggestions and support:

Dr Simon Brooker, KEMRI-Wellcome Trust Research Programme, Kenya

Professor Nilanthi de Silva, University of Kelaniya, Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

Dr Jonathan D. King, The Carter Center, Atlanta, GA, USA Ms Kim Koporc, Children Without Worms, Atlanta, GA, USA Dr Patrick Lammie, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, GA, USA

Ms Seung Lee, Save the Children US, Washington, DC, USA Dr Frank O. Richards Jr. , The Carter Center, Atlanta, GA, USA

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Mrs Natalie Roschnik, Save the Children US, Washington, DC, USA

Dr Muth Sinuon, National Malaria Center, Ministry of Health of Cambodia, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Grateful acknowledgement is also due to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Global Network for Neglected Tropical Diseases (GNNTD) for financial assistance with the publication of this document.

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