Actions taken/proposed to improve routine immunization coverage and VPD surveillance following the COVID-19 pandemic

EPI programme/NITAG
Sri Lanka
EPI data 2020-2021

EPI monthly data selected vaccines 2020

Provisional vaccination coverage 2021

- BCG
- Pentavalant 1/OPV1/IPV1
- Pentavalant 2/OPV2/IPV2
- Pentavalant 3/OPV3
- DPT_4th Dose
- DT_5th Dose
- Live JE Vaccine
- MMR Vaccine_1st Dose
- MMR Vaccine_2nd Dose
Vaccination coverage 2020-2021 by month

- May–June lockdown
- Most districts vaccination clinics conducted- data entry not completed
Impact of Covid-19 on EPI

- Intermittent lock-down at different geographical locations and whole country: affected Immunization clinic functioning
- On lifting lockdown and resumption: immunization services conducted in almost all areas
- Data entry into web based “eNIP” is not completed in different districts
- Different areas with varying proportions:
  - services provided, data deficient,
  - still trying to catch up for the 2nd quarter vaccination for delayed and missed children
- Same grass-root level staff involved in Covid-19 control and prevention activities
- Schools closed more than a year and school vaccination of HPV vaccination and aTd vaccination markedly disrupted
- Annual district level EPI-VPD reviews could conduct only in 6/26 districts
Actions taken

• Immunization focused guidelines issued for immunization improvement:
  • Immunization clinic resumption guidelines after lock-down : in March 2020
  • Strengthening Immunization services : in January 2021

• Ensured vaccine supply with regular stock reviewing
  • for cold chain maintenance, expiry dates and
  • move forward with new orders for maintaining vaccine supply

• Distant training programmes conducted to district level immunization staff to sustain immunization services

• Media programmes conducted targeting childhood vaccination and reminded childhood vaccination to be continued during Covid-19 awareness programmes to sustain demand for vaccination amidst Covid-19 pandemic

• Vaccines issued continuously
  • to all districts and maintained stocks
  • To private sector on request for continuation during their stock-out
Actions taken

• Ensure all newborns registered into field level “Birth and Immunization Register” – live register

• Supervisory categories: random 10 house surveys to ensure follow up of all children at households for vaccination in poor performance areas

• Opportunistic identification of children at visits for other illnesses and refer to area MOH for completion of vaccination
Planned actions

- EVM assessment: September-October 2021
- Continuation of EPI / VPD district reviews: postponed due to Covid-19 situation and accelerated Covid-19 vaccination programme ongoing
- Separate strategy to plan for HPV vaccination for school children: catch up missed children for vaccination by grades once schools re-start
- Regional Epidemiologist reviews: to assess administrative coverage data for 2021 for completion of data entry to eNIP with special focus on performance assessment
- Field level coverage survey 2022- Q3/Q4 (decision with the evolving Covid-19 pandemic situation)
- Planning to conduct OPD child survey in hospitals to understand completion of the vaccination, missed doses or delayed vaccination status
VPD situation

• Reported cases of VPD are very low
  • 30 cases reported to date: with non polio discarded rate of 0.56/100,000 under 15 population (annualized rate), compared to 0.97 in 2020 and 1.5 in 2019
  • Stool collection maintained at 95% to date in 2021

• Suspected Measles/Rubella cases: 24 cases with discarded rate of 0.11/100,000 population, compared to the discarded rate of 0.47 in 2020 and 1.6 in 2019
• Laboratory specimen collection rate of 90% and serology test reporting to the programme within 4 days 80%
Reasons for low VPD reporting rate

- Patients reporting to hospitals with minor conditions were low (due to fear of Covid-19)
- Hospital notifications also reduced – priority given to Covid-19
- Laboratories fully mobilized for Covid-19 testing
- Inter provincial/ district travel restrictions contributed for low treatment seeking
Planned activities for VPD surveillance strengthening

• Update circular guidelines for VPD surveillance strengthening

• Arrange awareness programmes through Professional Colleges for Paediatricians, Physicians, Neurologists, General Practitioners

• Refresher training for field level staff

• Resume VPD district level reviews together with EPI reviews
Thank you