



WEEKLY EPIDEMIOLOGICAL REPORT

A publication of the Epidemiological Unit,

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FLASHBACK 2007

The year 2007 was marked with resounding successes, emerging challenges and novel experiences for the Epidemiology Unit. Driven by its motto to improve health, and to enhance quality of life of the people of Sri Lanka, the dedicated technical and support staff of the Unit will strive even harder to turn each new challenge into a success story in 2008. It has become pertinent in this backdrop to briefly enumerate on the events of last year.

Two surveillance reviews were carried out in Moneragala and Kandy. The findings were shared with district teams to improve surveillance activities in the districts. Consultative meetings, district-level reviews and experts meetings were held to strengthen surveillance of Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP), Measles, Rubella, Dengue Fever/Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever (DF/DHF) and other endemic diseases

The sentinel site surveillance project for Pneumococcal, Rota virus and Hib infections were continued with the assistance of the South Asian Pneumococcal Network (SAPNA), International Vaccine Institute (IVI) and World Health Organization (WHO).

Data on three newly introduced notifiable diseases namely, Chickenpox, Mumps and Meningitis were gathered and necessary action was taken accordingly. Draft National guidelines for strengthening sentinel surveillance of communicable diseases were published as a booklet and disseminated among all the stakeholders. This was a prerequisite for further strengthening the disease surveillance system and expanding the system to include non-communicable diseases in

future.

Forecasting of possible outbreaks was made and preventive action taken. Outbreaks of hepatitis A and fever turned out to be Chikungunaya were successfully controlled in Gampola and Galnewa areas respectively. In latter part of the year 2007, routine notification and reports from sentinel surveillance sites have indicated an increasing number of leptospirosis patients in the Colombo, Gampaha, Kalutara, Matara, Galle, Kegalle, Ratnapura and Kandy districts. Considering this alarming situation, the Epidemiology Unit has guided the district & divisional health staff to take necessary measures to prevent and control possible leptospirosis outbreak in the respective areas.

In response to the few reported sporadic cases of poliomyelitis in Bihar state in India [where Buddhagaya is situated] steps were taken to immunize all pilgrims going to India on pilgrimage with OPV.

The website of the Epidemiology Unit was improved and regularly updated with the disease surveillance data. It was rated as the 7th most popular website in Sri Lanka in year 2007.

Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI)

In year 2007 too Sri Lanka was able to maintain near 100% coverage for all EPI vaccines. No shortage of vaccines was reported during the year and the Unit was able to ensure timely and adequate supplies of vaccines island wide including conflict areas. District level immunization coverage and wastage were reviewed quarterly with REE. Joint detailed EPI reviews were conducted with the Family Health Bureau in all

WEB SRI LANKA 2008

Contents

Page

1. Leading Article - Flashback 2007	1
2. Surveillance of vaccine preventable diseases & AFP (22 nd - 28 th Dec 2007)	3
3. Summary of newly introduced notifiable diseases (22 nd - 28 th Dec 2007)	3
4. Laboratory surveillance of dengue fever (22 nd - 28 th Dec 2007)	3
	4

except Jaffna, Mullaitive, Kilinochchi, Batticaloa and Kalmunai.

The Epidemiology Unit of Sri Lanka had organized an EPI Summit with the participation of all stakeholders of the programme in January 2007. The main objectives of this forum were to initiate a national dialogue on current and future strategies for the national immunization programme, agree on appropriate immunization schedules and time frames for the introduction of new vaccines after taking into consideration the priorities, cost, safety and programmatic feasibility and to reach a consensus on the national immunization policy for the next 5 to 10 years.

Epidemiology Unit has been able to solicit support of Global Alliance for Vaccine & Immunization [GAVI] to introduce combined Hib vaccine [Pentavelent] into the National Immunization Programme in Sri Lanka. During this year the Unit was able to successfully accomplish all the ground work including procurement of Pentavelent vaccine, distribution of vaccine to the service provider level and training of staff with a view to introducing new vaccine to the National Immunization programme. with effect from January 2008.

With the acquisition of the new crew cab vaccine distribution vehicle and completion of construction of central vaccine store our vaccine distribution and vaccine storing capacity were greatly enhanced.

Dengue Fever/Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever (DF/DHF)

Based on the routine surveillance data Dengue alerts were sent periodically regarding possible outbreaks. Provincial level dengue review meetings were held in all the high risk provinces with the collaboration of the National dengue control Unit to help them to assess their dengue control activities. In addition dengue surveillance review meetings were held in high risk MOH areas in the western province.

Avian influenza [AI] : Training of hospital staff of the 20 hospitals identified as sentinel sites for AI preparedness was completed. Development of isolation units in these hospitals which will be funded by Health Sector Development Project [HSDP] of world bank, was initiated.

A national workshop on Table Top Exercises on AI was conducted with all key stakeholders to evaluate the existing National Avian/Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan [NIPP].

Monthly meetings of the National Technical Committee on Ai preparedness were held to review progress of preparedness activities in the country. Provincial Technical committees were formed in Western, Eastern, Central and North Western Provinces.

The behavioral research study on community behavior regarding AI was completed and the final report was prepared. This was one of the key activities under the communication strategy on AI preparedness. Routine Human influenza surveillance was established in the hospitals identified as sentinel

sites for AI preparedness. This activity which is complementary to animal influenza surveillance activities carried out by DAPH, will identify current circulating strains of influenza viruses in the country and will act as an early warning system for a possible AI outbreak.

Control on Diarrhoeal Diseases [CDD] : No major outbreaks of diarrhoeal diseases were reported in year 2007. Two district reviews on diarrhoeal diseases and Hepatitis were carried out in Kandy and Nuwera-Eliya districts with the participation of the relevant central, provincial, district and divisional level stakeholders.

Health Sector Development Project [HSDP] - Immunization Sub component : Epidemiology Unit has embarked on a special project, with assistance from the World Bank funded HSDP project to enhance the quality of immunization services in Sri Lanka. In relation to this, training programmes were completed in 21 out of 26 health administrative districts in the country. Subsequently, the baseline Immunization Quality Assessment Survey also was completed in Field MCH Clinics in all MOH areas except for those in the Northern Province. This was followed by the selection of "Best Performing Immunization Clinics". Project proposals to develop facilities and infrastructure of the selected clinics were developed and funds amounting to a total of Rs.23,700,000 were released to the districts in 2007. Majority of the districts have utilized the funds totally.

Research ; Our unit functions as the main national research centre on epidemiology and a training centre for postgraduate research students and fellows involved in epidemiological studies. Following were some of the research activities carried out in 2007. Apart from these, national surveys on immunization coverage and cold chain maintenance are routinely carried out by the unit.

1. Study on safety and immunogenicity of SA 14-14-2 live JE vaccine to facilitate evidence-based decision on introducing the same in the National Programme
2. Cardiovascular risk assessment study to determine the percentage of population in each cardiovascular risk category based on the WHO/ISH risk prediction charts. (multi-centre)
3. Study on the transmission pattern of tuberculosis infection among household contacts to identify the potential risk factors by DNA finger-printing of mycobacterium
4. Determining the sero-prevalence of Chikungunya among adults in the age group of 20-50 years in the Colombo Municipality area
5. Development and testing a programme for opportunistic screening and management of high blood pressure in hospital setting using the total risk approach
6. Determining the prevalence of carcinogenic Human Papilloma Infection [HPV] and burden of cervical cancer attributable to HPV infection.

Table 1: Vaccine-preventable Diseases & AFP

22nd - 28th December 2007 (52nd Week)

Disease	No. of Cases by Province									Number of cases during current week in 2007	Number of cases during same week in 2006	Total number of cases to date in 2007	Total number of cases to date in 2006	Difference between the number of cases to date between 2007 & 2006
	W	C	S	N	E	NW	NC	U	Sab					
Acute Flaccid Paralysis	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	03	85	123	-30.9%
Diphtheria	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00.0%
Measles	00	00	00	01	00	00	00	00	00	01	01	81	40	+102.5%
Tetanus	01 CO=1	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	01	00	39	49	-20.4%
Whooping Cough	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	47	72	-34.7%
Tuberculosis	123	00	09	04	07	00	00	00	10	153	120	9817	10016	-1.9%

Table 2: Newly Introduced Notifiable Diseases

22nd - 28th December 2007 (52nd Week)

Disease	No. of Cases by Province										Number of cases during current week in 2007	Total number of cases to date in 2007
	W	C	S	N	E	NW	NC	U	Sab			
Chicken-pox	04	05	11	00	19	04	05	02	04	54	3435	
Meningitis	04 CO=1 KL=3	00	03 GL=2 MT=1	00	02 AM=1 KA=1	05 KU=5	02 AP=1 PO=1	01 MO=1	01 KG=1	18	783	
Mumps	02	03	02	00	70	10	03	00	00	90	2314	

Key to Table 1 & 2

Provinces: W=Western, C=Central, S=Southern, N=North, E= East, NC=North Central, NW=North Western, U=Uva, Sab=Sabaragamuwa.

DPDHS Divisions: CB=Colombo, GM=Gampaha, KL=Kalutara, KD=Kandy, ML=Matale, NE=Nuwara Eliya, GL=Galle, HB=Hambantota, MT=Matara, JF=Jaffna, KN=Killinochchi, MN=Mannar, VA=Vavuniya, MU=Mullaitivu, BT=Batticaloa, AM=Ampara, TR=Trincomalee, KM=Kalmunai, KR=Kurunegala, PU=Puttalam, AP=Anuradhapura, PO=Polonnaruwa, BD=Badulla, MO=Moneragala, RP=Ratnapura, KG=Kegalle.

Table 3: Laboratory Surveillance of Dengue Fever 22nd - 28th December 2007 (52nd Week)

Samples	Number tested	Number positive *	Serotypes				
			D ₁	D ₂	D ₃	D ₄	Negative
Number for current week	05	01	00	00	01	00	00
Total number to date in 2007	477	55	01	25	19	00	09

Source: Genetech Molecular Diagnostics & School of Gene Technology, Colombo. * Not all positives are subjected to serotyping.

NA= Not Available.

Data Sources:

Weekly Return of Communicable Diseases: Diphtheria, Measles, Tetanus, Whooping Cough, Human Rabies, Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever, Japanese Encephalitis, Chickenpox, Meningitis, Mumps.

Special Surveillance: Acute Flaccid Paralysis.

National Control Program for Tuberculosis and Chest Diseases: Tuberculosis.

Table 4: Selected notifiable diseases reported by Medical Officers of Health
22nd - 28th December 2007 (52nd Week)

DPDHS Division	Dengue Fever / DHF*		Dysentery		Encephalitis		Enteric Fever		Food Poisoning		Leptospirosis		Typhus Fever		Viral Hepatitis		Human Rabies		Returns Received Timely**
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	%
Colombo	40	1865	05	361	00	11	03	124	00	96	04	163	00	05	01	155	00	02	00
Gampaha	30	980	03	324	00	30	02	88	00	64	01	311	00	19	01	212	00	08	43
Kalutara	16	425	05	488	00	06	02	65	00	43	18	221	00	03	00	64	00	05	00
Kandy	06	415	01	316	00	06	00	66	00	16	02	150	00	87	03	1975	00	03	27
Matale	03	121	00	252	00	06	01	40	00	13	12	172	00	05	01	141	00	02	42
Nuwara Eliya	00	41	01	237	00	02	00	122	00	369	00	14	02	38	01	561	00	01	29
Galle	01	100	01	173	00	13	00	26	02	44	03	169	00	27	01	24	00	05	19
Hambantota	04	102	02	200	00	06	02	24	00	20	01	57	01	74	00	29	00	02	18
Matara	03	236	02	298	00	10	02	54	00	25	04	289	03	220	00	35	00	02	19
Jaffna	05	239	02	175	00	02	01	439	02	15	00	00	05	134	01	30	00	01	50
Kilinochchi	00	01	00	01	00	00	01	07	00	00	00	00	00	02	00	04	00	02	50
Mannar	00	07	00	32	00	00	04	116	00	00	00	02	00	00	00	26	00	01	50
Vavuniya	01	41	03	86	00	04	00	21	00	65	00	03	00	00	00	14	00	00	00
Mullaitivu	00	00	00	40	00	08	00	21	00	02	00	00	00	00	00	17	00	00	100
Batticaloa	00	79	00	477	01	12	00	24	00	10	00	00	00	22	02	1176	01	06	55
Ampara	00	05	15	204	00	00	00	06	00	02	00	08	00	03	00	37	00	00	71
Trincomalee	01	63	11	335	00	04	00	30	00	25	00	12	02	23	03	121	00	02	67
Kurunegala	18	791	08	532	00	09	01	73	00	37	03	87	01	46	04	109	00	08	22
Puttalam	31	372	01	217	00	17	03	106	00	09	00	31	02	09	01	84	00	00	44
Anuradhapur	18	276	01	203	00	10	00	22	00	17	00	41	00	20	02	48	00	03	47
Polonnaruwa	01	70	00	170	00	03	00	14	00	64	00	22	00	00	00	52	00	00	14
Badulla	05	83	16	651	00	07	02	99	00	13	00	49	00	169	03	400	00	01	13
Monaragala	03	57	07	363	00	02	03	60	01	40	01	56	00	93	00	47	00	02	10
Ratnapura	04	449	04	602	00	20	01	79	00	24	00	82	00	32	00	105	00	03	44
Kegalle	00	444	02	312	00	11	00	69	00	10	00	246	00	46	03	270	00	00	36
Kalmunai	00	09	01	243	01	04	00	10	00	14	00	02	00	02	00	133	00	00	46
SRI LANKA	190	7271	91	7292	02	203	28	1805	05	1037	49	2187	16	1079	27	5869	01	59	33

Source: Weekly Returns of Communicable Diseases (WRCD).

*Dengue Fever / DHF refers to Dengue Fever / Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever.

**Timely refers to returns received on or before 5 January, 2008 Total number of reporting units =290. Number of reporting units data provided for the current week: 238

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