

## A-39: Evaluation of school programme for dengue prevention

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The global pandemic of Dengue began soon after World War II and since then there has been a dramatic increase in the incidence of Dengue and its severe forms such as Dengue haemorrhagic fever (DHF) and Dengue shock syndrome (DSS). Since 1988 there have been regular outbreaks of DHF in Sri Lanka. Considering trends in epidemiological transmission Sri Lanka is likely to be on the threshold of a major epidemic of DHF. Prevention and control of DHF by environmental sanitation through education of school/college students is strongly recommended and the success of such a programme, largely depends on the knowledge imparted. The objective of this study was to evaluate the success in imparting knowledge on DF/DHF of the 'School Programme for Dengue Prevention' conducted by the Medical Research Institute.

The study was conducted in 4 schools of which 2 participated in the educational programme. The 2 non-participant schools were selected randomly from within the same area as the participant ones to be used as a comparison. Information was obtained using a self-administered questionnaire consisting of three parts obtaining socio-demographic data of respondents, and knowledge and attitudes towards dengue.

There was no difference in knowledge and attitudes between those who participated in the programme and those who did not. It is not possible to conclude that the School programme was not successful, due to the presence of factors that were likely to enhance the knowledge of the non-participants, such as a higher level of parental education. There was significantly more knowledge on DF/DHF among the females of the population when compared to the males. These facts should be made use of in targeting educational programmes among school children.