

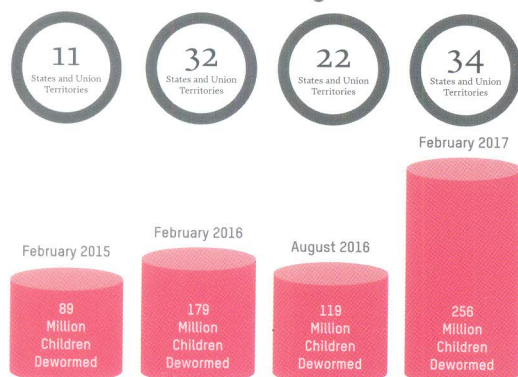


User-centric Community Mobilization Efforts for National Deworming Day

Evidence
Action
Deworm the
World Initiative

Launched in 2015, National Deworming Day (NDD) is a nationwide effort by the Government of India's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) to control parasitic worm infection among children. The fixed single day program is implemented on 10 February in all states, and biannually on August 10 in most states based on worm prevalence data. On NDD, children aged 1-19 are given deworming tablets at schools by teachers and at preschools (*anganwadis*) by *anganwadi* workers. NDD aims to reach all children in this age group, regardless of their enrollment status.

Snapshot of National Deworming Day Coverage

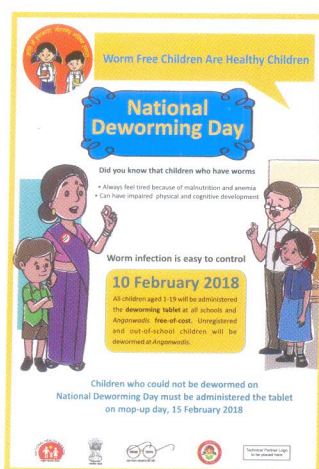


*National target for the August 2017 NDD round is 310 Million children

The NDD scaled from 11 states/union territories in February 2015 to a pan-India program in a span of a year. Though relatively new, the success of the program hinges on the collaboration between MoHFW, the Ministry of Women and Children Development, and the Ministry of Human Resource Development. Evidence Action, is the technical assistance partner to the MoHFW for NDD. Implementation experience indicates that a robust awareness generation and community mobilization campaign contributes to an optimal program coverage.

To reach children at such a large scale, awareness needs to be built among stakeholders and beneficiaries alike. There is general lack of public awareness about the impact of worm infections on children's health and education. Expanding program outreach to private schools and out-of-school children requires specific, targeted efforts to mobilize their participation.

A User-centric Communication Strategy



Given the scale and the multiple target groups that need to be reached by the program, it is important that any communication campaign be easy for states to customize, while having standardized messaging across the country. To gain insights around this, in 2015, Evidence Action, undertook a user-centric assessment of resource material for the program. The assessment was conducted in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan involving in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with state and district officials, and frontline workers such as *anganwadi* workers, teachers, and ASHAs. Insights from the assessment showed that prototypes that had big clear illustrations, were not text heavy, and had images that were easy to identify worked well with the target audience. Program mascots - siblings, Swati, a school-going girl and Raju, an *anganwadi*-going boy - were developed through this assessment process and now feature in the NDD logo. The final set of products employ catchy and colorful comic-style illustrations with supporting text, making the material easy to understand and relatable for multiple groups.

For the February 2016 NDD round, these insights were incorporated while developing an awareness generation and community mobilization resource kit. Each product in the kit has a specific target group and distribution channel, yet all are designed with two basic objectives: 1) to inform about NDD and its benefits; and 2) to encourage all children aged 1-19 to be dewormed on NDD at their school or *anganwadi*, including unregistered preschool and out-of-school children, who are dewormed at their nearest *anganwadi*.



Components of the NDD Communication Campaign

The current user-centric communications campaign material is translated and customized into several languages, while maintaining standard program messages and branding. The target groups for this multi-pronged campaign ranges from children, parents, and community members, to government functionaries, and the general public.

These materials also play a role in educating media on the importance of mass deworming for children, with an aim of generating positive program reportage and reduction in sensationalizing of adverse events or misreporting, if any. To further engage media, state health departments are encouraged to organize a press sensitization workshop prior to NDD. In states where Evidence Action extends technical assistance, press releases are circulated with program details for media coverage that enhances credibility about the need for mass drug administration and the program. Finally, state and national launch events, with participation from political leadership and high ranking dignitaries, play a significant part in generating media interest and establishing confidence towards the program among communities.

Awareness Generation Material

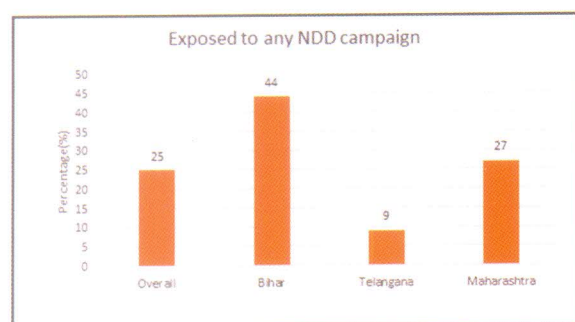
- TV ads
- Radio ad and jingle
- Newspaper ads
- Posters
- Banners
- Hoarding/billboard
- Community handbill
- Flash ads
- WhatsApp messages
- Social media outputs

Community Mobilization Material

- Miking/loudspeaker script
- Rally slogans
- Wall writing

Gauging Reach through a Campaign Assessment

In 2016, Evidence Action, with approvals from MoHFW, carried out a communications campaign assessment to recommend strategies for future campaign strengthening to the Government of India and state governments. The assessment, conducted in Bihar, Telangana, and Maharashtra deep dived into the NDD communication campaign and aimed to collect insights to improve campaign outreach.






Results from the assessment suggest that the campaign after two rounds had yet to reach its core audience and trigger recall, which varies from 9% in Maharashtra with just two rounds, to 44% in Bihar with five rounds of deworming. This suggests that with more rounds, coupled with focused awareness building efforts over a sustained period of time, recall can improve. The assessment also found that 60% of out-of-school children were not exposed to the campaign at all, which could significantly influence the number of children in that group being dewormed.

Overall, the quantitative and qualitative findings showed that those exposed to the campaign perceive it to be effective, even if the overall recall was low. The key messages that target groups recalled showed that the content of the current campaign resonated with them. However, the low levels of awareness reinforce the need to implement more intensive communications campaigns over several rounds. For this to happen, both national and state governments need to continue to invest in these activities in a campaign mode.

A More Engaged Government Counterpart

With each passing round, national and state governments have diversified the campaign leading up to NDD in order to reach more audiences through multiple platforms. In February 2017, the MoHFW spent over INR 56 million (USD 871,120) on promotions through 53 public and 77 private TV channels, and 37 public and 120 private radio stations throughout the country¹. Additionally, in February 2017 some states engaged in social media activities for NDD for the first time, further intensifying these efforts in the August 2017 round. The NDD social media campaign adds credibility as the program reaches private schools and in urban areas, while informing general public and media about program objectives and achievements. Below is an analysis of the number of Tweets posted in August 2016 and February 2017 rounds.

¹ Based on DAVP reports received from the MoHFW

	@MoHFW_India 7 to 22 Feb	@MoHFW_India 31 Jul to 17 Aug	@IPNadda 6 to 10 Feb	@IPNadda 9 Aug
 Tweets	62	72	4	1
 Likes	3,062	4,109	485	164
 Re-tweets	2,414	3,476	480	93

NDD Social Media Engagement: Feb v/s Aug 2017 State Data

	Department	Timeline (Feb)	No. Posts	Timeline (Aug)	No. Posts
Jharkhand Facebook	NHM	Feb 1 to 9	26	Aug 1 to 20	45
Uttar Pradesh Facebook & Twitter	NHM	Feb 27 to Mar 4	23	Aug 5 to 13	30
Telangana Facebook	ICDS & NHM**	Feb 8	5	Aug 1 to 12	40
Tripura Facebook	NHM	Feb 3 to 14	11	Aug 1 to 21	47
Rajasthan Facebook	ICDS & NHM's NDD FB Page	Feb 1 to 14	37	NA	NA
Madhya Pradesh Facebook	ICDS & Education	Jan 31 to Feb 14	6	NA	NA
Chhattisgarh Facebook & Twitter	NHM	NA	NA	Jul 31 to Aug 17	109

*Chhattisgarh and Bihar didn't have functional / active social media handle during the Feb 2017 round
 **ICDS posted in Feb 2017 and NHM posted in Aug 2017 as the page was only created in July 2017

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Challenges and Way Forward

With each NDD round, the campaign material continues to improve and be adapted at national and state levels based on lessons and experiences from the previous round. Though robust campaign material has been developed, tested, and disseminated, campaign roll-out can be strengthened further in the states. This includes budgeting appropriately for the communication activities as per envelope available and planning well in advance to give sufficient time to build interest around the program. States are encouraged to leverage local, cost-effective media such as TV scrolls, flash ads, SMS, WhatsApp, and newspaper inserts, in addition to traditional channels such as TV and radio. District level activities such as miking and rallies, and school-based activities during morning assemblies must be planned strategically and executed in time for maximum impact.

Engaging at multiple levels and ensuring diverse media channels used across geographies will also help in reaching children enrolled in private schools or those that are out-of-school. Finally, ASHAs, teachers, and *anganwadi* workers need to be leveraged for community mobilization through reinforcement of messages during trainings, making materials available through timely integrated distribution, and advocating to state and district officials to engage functionaries through multiple approaches to enhance their familiarity with NDD.

