

# MOST CHILD DEATHS DUE TO PNEUMONIA IN INDIA

Relevant for: Health, Education & Human Resources | Topic: Health & Sanitation and related issues

File photo for representative purpose shows a nurse administering oral rehydration solution to a child in Erode. | Photo Credit: [M. Govarthan](#)

India continues to have the highest burden of pneumonia and diarrhoea child deaths in the world, with 158,176 pneumonia and 102,813 diarrhoea deaths in 2016. This was stated in the 'Pneumonia and Diarrhoea Progress Report' released on Friday by the International Vaccine Access Centre (IVAC) at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

The report, which looked at progress in fighting pneumonia and diarrhoea in 15 countries with the greatest number of deaths from these illnesses, finds health systems are falling woefully short of ensuring that the most vulnerable children have access to prevention and treatment services.

The 15 countries that the report looked at account for 70% of global pneumonia and diarrhoea deaths in children under five. Globally, pneumonia and diarrhoea led to nearly one of every four deaths in children under five years of age in 2016. Authors at the IVAC have also called on the global community to collect better data and target communities of greatest need.

The report was released ahead of the 10th World Pneumonia Day on November 12.

The report analyses how effectively countries are delivering 10 key interventions — breastfeeding, vaccination, access to care, use of antibiotics, oral rehydration solution (ORS) and zinc supplementation — to help protect against, prevent, and treat, pneumonia and diarrhoea. The measures are proven to help prevent death due to these illnesses and could help achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal target of reducing under-five mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births by 2030. The Pneumonia and Diarrhoea Progress Report, supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, issued annually, finds that although countries are making progress in immunisation coverage, they seriously lag in efforts to treat childhood illnesses — especially among populations that are remote, impoverished or otherwise left behind.

Progress in India — home to more under-five pneumonia and diarrhoea deaths than any other country in 2016 — has been mixed.

Increasing coverage of Haemophilus Influenzae Type B (Hib) vaccine, as well as continued scale-up of rotavirus vaccines, first introduced in mid-2016, led to a bump in scoring for these interventions since last year's report. Introduced in 2017, the Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV) has been included in only six States to date. Further scale-up of the vaccine to all States should be considered

The end of the monsoons in India signal a welcome turn in the climate. While the drop in temperature brings relief, the spike in vector-borne diseases

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