Evidence-based Policymaking

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Coverage

- Rationality in Policy making
- What is evidence based policy making
- Increasing use of data driven evidence
- Big data and data analytics
- The road ahead

Rational Model of Policymaking

- Rational model seeks
  - to learn all the value preferences extant in a society,
  - assign each value a relative weight,
  - discover all the policy alternatives available,
  - know all the consequences of each alternative,
  - Cost benefit analysis, and
  - select the most efficient policy alternative

(Henry, 2004:314)

Evidence-Based Policymaking (EBP)

- The term EBP gained political currency under the Blair administration in UK since 1997.
- It was intended to signify modernising mandate.
- It aimed at replacing ideologically-driven politics with rational decision making.

Advantages of EBP

- It helps making well informed decisions about policies, programmes and projects by putting the best available evidence from research at the heart of policy development and implementation’
- Evidence supports rational analysis.
- It advocates a more rational, rigorous and systematic approach.

We need evidence to

- Understand the policy environment and how it is changing,
- Appraise the likely effects of policy changes so we can choose between different policy options and subsequently assess their impacts,
- Demonstrate the links between strategic direction, intended outcomes and policy objectives, and
- To show that there are clear lines of argument and evidence between what we are aiming for and what we are doing now.

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- Determine what we need to do to meet our strategic goals or intermediate objectives.
- Influence others so that they help us achieve our policy goals and take them through to delivery.
- Communicate the quality (breadth and depth) of our evidence base to meet the open government agenda.

Issues in the use of EBP

1. What evidence is used in the policymaking process?
2. How evidence is incorporated into policymaking.
3. Evidence is not the only factor which influences policymaking.

Factors influencing evidence

Overcoming the influences

- Thrust to big data and data analytics to overcome these influences. Three themes are emerging-
  1. the role that institutional capacity has within government to utilize big data analytics;
  2. government use of big data analytics in the context of digital public services; and
  3. the way that big data information enters the policy cycle, focusing on substantive and procedural policy instruments.

Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme

Objectives:

To strengthen/maintain decentralized laboratory-based IT enabled disease surveillance system for epidemic-prone diseases to monitor disease trends and to detect and respond to outbreaks in early rising phase through trained Rapid Response Team (RRTs).

Programme Components

- Integration and decentralization of surveillance activities.
- Human Resource Development – Training of all concerned officials.
- Use of ICT for collection, collation, compilation, analysis and dissemination of data.
- Strengthening of public health laboratories.
- Inter-sectoral Co-ordination for zoonotic diseases.

Applications of GIS

- Find geographical distribution and variation of diseases
- Analyse spatial and temporal trends
- Identify gaps in immunisations
- Map populations at risk and stratify risk factors
- Document health care needs of a community and assess resource allocations
- Monitor diseases and interventions over time

....contd.

- Manage patient care environments, materials, supplies and human resources
- Monitor the utilisation of health centres
- Route health workers, equipments and supplies to service locations
- Publish health information using maps on the Internet
- In Locating the nearest health facility

Examples:
Health Sector: Disease Mapping

Chakardharpur subdivision of the West Singhbhum district of the Jharkhand

Malaria Hotspot Analysis

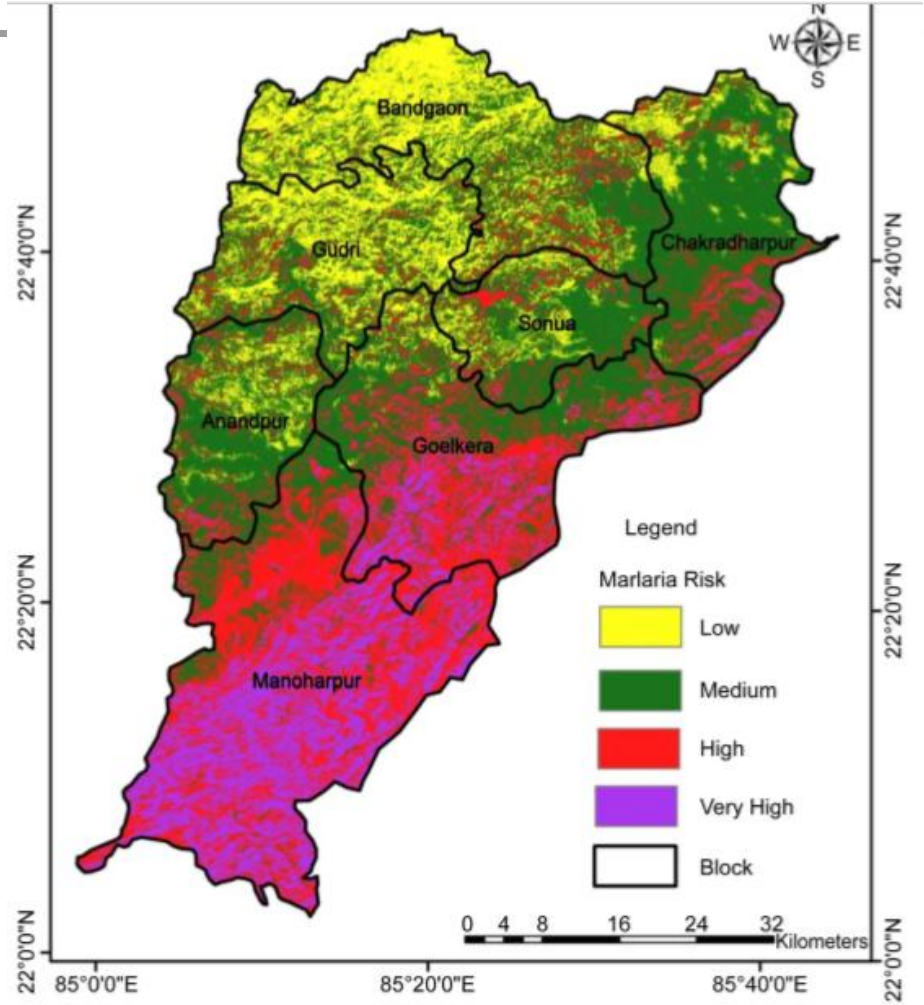
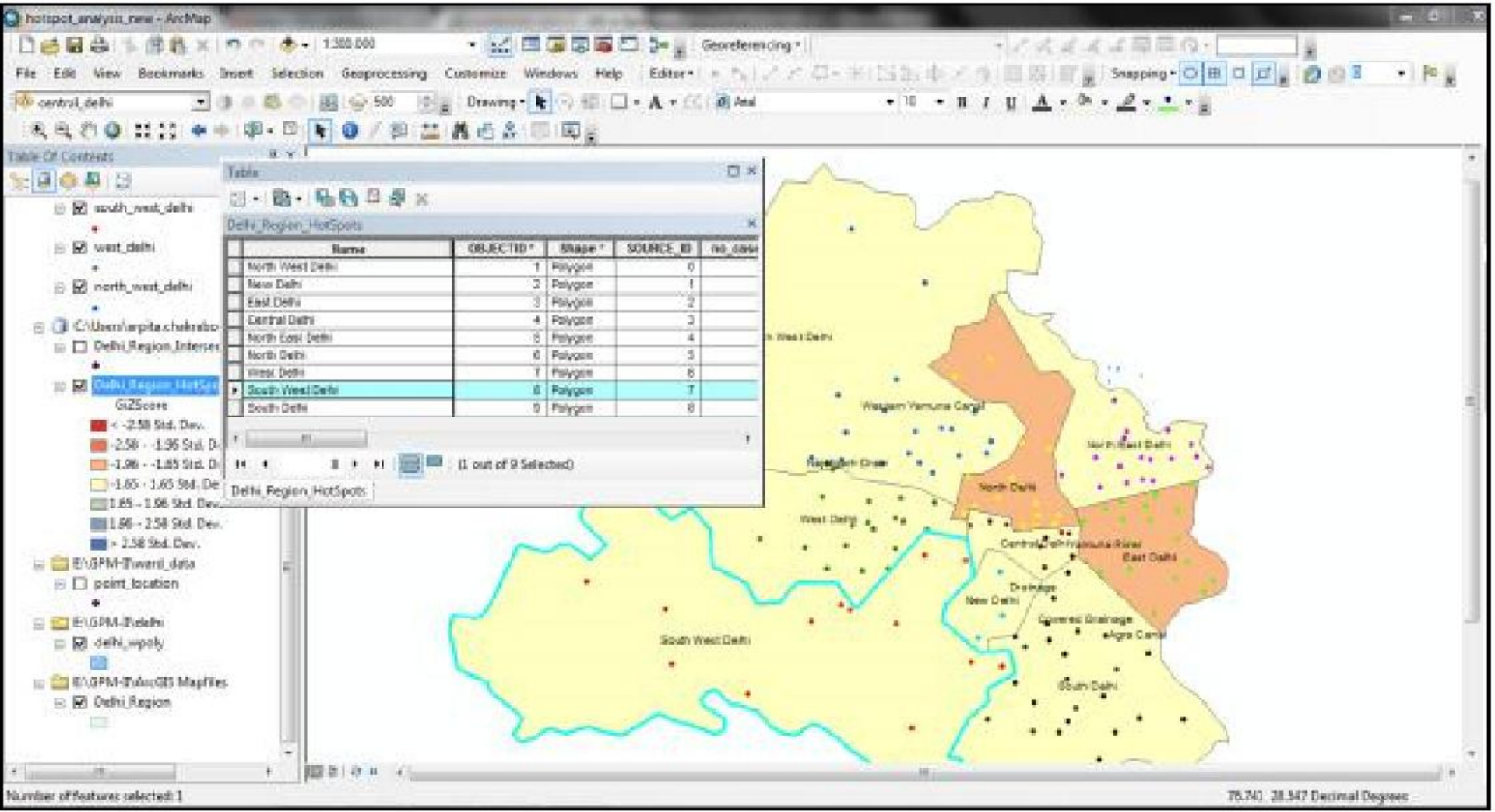


Figure 7. Malaria integrated risk map.

East and North Delhi Hot spots for Dengue cases



Evidence based action in COVID-19

- Containment plan in clusters posing high risk of further spread based on data.
- Mathematical modelling studies to support the strategy.
- Zoning of all the districts in Red, Orange and Green based on numbers reported from each of the places
- Testing and medication on the basis of results seen in other countries.

Randomised Controlled Trials

- Controlled trials can bring rigour to the process of determining what works — and what does not — in public policy.
- RCTs are the so-called gold standard of evidence-based policy.
- In an RCT, participants randomly assigned either to receive an intervention or not (a control group).
- Comparison of two groups to analyse the effects of a policy.

RCT in India

- Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo applied this in India, especially in educational sector.
- Raised the prospect of RCTs as a means to help policymakers find realistic answers to questions at hand.
- Policymakers can be better prepared and informed for new policy intervention, or when evaluating and refining current interventions.
- However, it would require such experiments to be conducted on a large scale for a country like India.

Future….

- Key to the success of the evidence based planning process and how effectively it can inform policy would depend on
  - The quantity and quality of the evidence base,
  - The way in which it is assessed, interpreted and fed into policy.
  - The extent to which it is contextualised, readily accessible and valued by policymakers.
- Prime Minister Modi said "Our aim is to make evidence-based policy-making an integral part of governance by the year 2022. It will also help in creating a new identity of New India".

Thank you