

# Schematic life-cycle of soil-transmitted helminths

# Burden of soil-transmitted helminth infections (STH)

- STH are among the most common infections worldwide
- More than 1.5 billion people, or 24 % of the world's population, are affected by STH infections worldwide.
- 1.2 million pre-school children and 3 million school children are in need of periodical deworming in the WHO European region.
- STH are transmitted by eggs present in human faeces which in turn contaminate soil in areas where sanitation is poor.

# Life-cycle of soil-transmitted helminths

An infected individual contaminates soil with faeces containing helminth eggs. Eggs develop in the soil

need about 3 weeks before eggs become infective

Infection of individuals by ingestion of eggs through food or dirty hands, or by larvae penetrating the skin

There is no direct person-to-person transmission

Helminths live in the intestine of an infected person

In the infected individual, eggs or larvae develop into adult worms, which produce eggs. The eggs are passed in the faeces.

Modified from:

[http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2011/9789241548267\\_eng.pdf](http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2011/9789241548267_eng.pdf)

# STH infections cause morbidity

- Adverse affect on nutritional status;
- Impairment of cognitive processes;
- Cause complications that require surgical intervention;
- Induce reactions in tissues (notably granuloma)

# Recent activities

- Meeting on Control and prevention of STH, December 2012, Bonn, Germany
- Country situation assessment (STH/WASH) missions to Georgia, Moldova and Romania
- Second meeting to review progress made and discuss regional framework for control and prevention of STH in the European region

# WHA resolution 66.12, Neglected tropical diseases, 27 May 2013

*-to improve coordination for **reducing transmission and strengthening control of neglected tropical diseases** taking into account social determinants of health, **through provision of safe drinking-water, basic sanitation**, health promotion and education, vector control and veterinary public health, taking into consideration One Health;*

## **Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH):**

- important determinant of STH infections
- play an important role in advancing STH prevention and control strategies.