Table 2 Baseline values of haematological parameters and vitamin B12/folate (mean [SD])

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| **Studies on B12** | **Author** |  | **Intervention group** | **Control group** |
| Dangour (28) | Haemoglobin (g/dL) | 14.0 (1.1) | 13.8 (1.2) |
|  | Haematocrit (fraction) | 41 (3) | 41 (3) |
|  | Anaemic individuals (n) | 3 of 80 | 10 of 75 |
|  | Vitamin B12 (pmol/L) | 232 (52) | 237 (60) |
|  | B12 deficiency (n) | 3 of 80 | 4 of 75 |
| Favrat (29) | Haematocrit (fraction) | 40.4 (3.9) | 39.8 (4.6) |
|  | Anaemic individuals (n) | 10 of 23 | 7 of 22 |
|  | Vitamin B12 (pmol/L) | 167 (23) | 155 (20) |
|  | B12 deficiency (n) | 8 of 23 | 12 of 22 |
| Hvas (30) | Haemoglobin (g/dL) | 13.1 (1.4) | 13.5 (1.2) |
|  | Anaemic individuals (n) | 16 of 67 | 12 of 70 |
|  | Vitamin B12 (pmol/L) | 303 (159) | 277 (92) |
|  | B12 deficiency (n) | 1 of 67 | 1 of 70 |
| Seal (31) (1) | Haemoglobin (g/dL) | 12.4 (1.4) | 13.2 (1.3) |
|  | Anaemic individuals (n) | 6 of 12 | 4 of 14 |
|  | Vitamin B12 (pmol/L) | 135 (27) | 143 (21) |
|  | B12 deficiency (n) | 9 of 12 | 7 of 14 |
| Seal (31) (2) | Haemoglobin (g/dL) | 13.2 (1.7) | 13.2 (1.3) |
|  | Anaemic individuals (n) | 4 of 14 | 4 of 14 |
|  | Vitamin B12 (pmol/L) | 153 (39) | 143 (21) |
|  | B12 deficiency (n) | 10 of 14 | 7 of 14 |
| **Studies on folic acid** | **Author** |  | **Intervention group** | **Control group** |
| Durga(32) | Haemoglobin (g/dL) | 14.2 (1.1) | 14.3 (1.1) |
|  | Haematocrit (fraction) | 44 (4) | 44 (4) |
|  | Anaemic individuals (n) | 22 of 395 | 21 of 407 |
|  | Folate (nmol/l) | 12.4 (4.3) | 12.6 (4.6) |
|  | Folate deficiency (n) | 24 of 395 | 30 of 407 |
| Pathansali (33) | Haemoglobin (g/dL) | 13.2 (0.9) | 13.0 (0.9) |
|  | Haematocrit (fraction) | 40 (2) | 40 (2) |
|  | Anaemic individuals (n) | 3 of 12 | 2 of 12 |
|  | Folate (nmol/l) | 13.8 (5.0) | 15.0 (6.0) |
|  | Folate deficiency (n) | 9 of 12 | 7 of 12 |
| Ntaios (34) | Haemoglobin (g/dL) | 13.9 (0.7) | 14.2 (1.2) |
|  | Haematocrit (fraction) | 42 (2) | 43 (4) |
|  | Anaemic individuals (n) | 4 of 53 | 2 of 50 |
|  | Folate (nmol/l) | 19.9 (8.7) | 18.2 (6.1) |
|  | Folate deficiency (n) | 0 of 53 | 0 of 50 |

Anaemia defined as haemoglobin <12 g/dL (haematocrit <0.4%) for male and <13 g/dL (haematocrit <0.35%) for female individuals.

Vitamin B12 deficiency defined as B12 <150 pmol/l.

Folate deficiency defined as folate <7 nmol/l.