

Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention in The Gambia

Coverage Summary Report 2016

Background: Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention was introduced in The Gambia in 2014 and delivered with support by the ACCESS-SMC project in 2015 and 2016 in Upper River and Central River Regions. In 2016 the first of four monthly cycles of SMC was implemented in late August /early September, and the final cycle in late November / early December. It is important SMC programmes are monitored to ensure the intervention is delivered effectively reaching the children that need it.

WHO recommends that children should receive all four monthly cycles, and should adhere to the treatment dose each month, in order to maximise protection and minimise selection for drug resistance. As part of the monitoring of the SMC programme in The Gambia, a coverage survey was carried out in late December/early January by MRC with support from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, to determine the proportion of children that received each monthly treatment, and to ask about adherence to the treatment doses, and reasons for missed treatments.

Key messages:

The reach of the SMC programme in The Gambia has been excellent, 81% of eligible children received SMC treatment at least once in 2016. 64% of eligible children received at least three monthly treatments.

43% of children received treatment at all 4 SMC cycles.

61% of eligible children slept under an insecticide treated net the night before the survey.

Of those children who received an SMC card, 66% had a card at the time of the survey, for inspection by the survey team.

Children who are more than 5 years old at the time of the first cycle should not receive SMC, in The Gambia this was respected, only 15% of children aged 6-7 years at the time of the survey, had received SMC.

Training of health workers involved in SMC delivery should emphasise the importance of recording the date of each treatment on the child's SMC card, to allow more accurate assessment of coverage.

Key indicators 2016:

Number surveyed who were eligible for all 4 SMC cycles	1138
Slept under a bednet last night	61%
Received an SMC card	75%
<i>Confirmed by card if available, otherwise from caregiver recall:</i>	
Received at least one cycle	81%
Received at least 3 cycles	64%
Received all 4 cycles	43%
Received no SMC	20%
For those that had SMC at the last cycle, adherence to all 3 doses	99%
Children 6-7yrs old who received SMC at least once	15%

More details on Key indicators: 1706 children were included in the survey, 1138 of these were eligible to receive all 4 cycles of SMC in 2016 based on their age at the time of the first SMC cycle. Around 75% of eligible children received an SMC card and received at least one cycle of SMC. If an SMC card was received, approximately 66% of children retained the card for inspection. Based on the card (where available, and on recall of the monthly cycles, or the number of blister packs received otherwise), 64% of eligible children received at least 3 cycles of SMC, and 43% received all 4 cycles. Coverage of the individual cycles is more difficult to estimate because documentation of dates on the card is known to be incomplete, and caregivers may not be able to accurately recall if their child was treated in specific months (but may recall more confidently the number of times they were treated). Coverage appeared to be slightly lower at cycle 4 (coverage was 53%, 53%, 49% and 39% for cycles 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively).

Reported adherence to the three day course of SMC was excellent, with 99% of those who had received SMC reporting that the full course was given.

Of 450 children aged between 6 and 7 years who should not receive SMC, 56 (18%) had received an SMC card, and 45 (14.8%) of caregivers reported that the child had received at least one SMC cycle, with about 11% reporting that the child had received at least 3 cycles.

Report compiled for the NMCP by LSHTM with data supplied by MRC.

Table: Key indicators of SMC Coverage – The Gambia 2016

Number children 3mons–7yrs included	1706					
Number eligible for all 4 SMC cycles [§]	1138					
	n/N	%	95% Confidence Interval			
Slept under a bednet last night	668/1136	61.3	(51.4-70.3)			
Received SMC card	839/1138	75.1	(68.4-80.7)			
Retained card if card received	540/839	66.1	(57.3-74.0)			
Received SMC cycle 1	581/1138	52.6	(44.7-60.3)			
Received SMC cycle 2	601/1138	52.7	(46.1-59.3)			
Received SMC cycle 3	562/1138	49.0	(42.2-55.8)			
Received SMC cycle 4	440/1138	39.4	(31.8-47.5)			
	Confirmed by card if available, otherwise recall[^]			Maximum by card or recall		
No. of SMC cycles	n/N	%	95% Confidence Interval	n/N	%	95% Confidence Interval
0	309/1138	26.2	(19.6-34.0)	226/1138	19.4	(13.7-26.9)
1	156/1138	13.9	(10.0-19.2)	73/1138	6.1	(3.6-10.3)
2	162/1138	14.0	(11.1-17.4)	124/1138	10.4	(7.8-13.7)
3	202/1138	18.7	(13.8-24.9)	229/1138	20.8	(16.1-26.4)
4	309/1138	27.2	(21.5-33.8)	486/1138	43.3	(35.8-51.1)
Received no SMC*	226/1138	19.4	(13.7-26.9)	226/1138	19.4	(13.7-26.9)
Received at least one cycle	829/1138	73.8	(66.0-80.4)	912/1138	80.6	(73.1-86.3)
Received at least 3 cycles	511/1138	45.9	(38.8-53.2)	715/1138	64.1	(55.7-71.6)
Received all 4 cycles	309/1138	27.2	(21.5-33.8)	486/1138	43.3	(35.8-51.1)

Percentages are survey -weighted and will not equate to n/N. [§] aged at least 3 months at time of first cycle, and under 5 years at time of survey. * this is confirmed as no receipt, rather than failure to indicate receipt.