

Sightsavers deworming programme

Guinea Conakry - three health districts (3HDs)

GiveWell schistosomiasis (SCH) and soil transmitted helminths (STH) project
 Year two annual report: April 2018 – March 2019

Country: Guinea

Location: N'zérékoré, Lola, Yomou

Start date: January 2017

Project goal: The reduction in the prevalence and intensity of schistosomiasis (SCH) and soil transmitted helminths (STH) in school aged children.

Project summary

Following on from a successful year 1, over 200,000 children have been treated for SCH and STH in the second year of the project; once again hugely exceeding project targets for the number of children treated.

Due to the high prevalence (>50%) of SCH in these three districts, they are also eligible for adult treatments, following WHO guidelines. Therefore in 2018, as drugs were available, adults were also targeted for treatment.

Project output summary

Output	Indicator	Year 2 target	Year 2 to date
Treat school aged children between 5-15 years for SCH and STH through MDA	No. of school age children between 5-15 years treated for SCH	139,685	259,336
	No. of school age children between 5-15 years treated for STH	139,685	*259,336

* Includes 42,104 school aged children treated in Yomou. Yomou had a prevalence rate of just under 20%, however as in previous years, the MoH policy is to add STH wherever SCH is being treated.

Total number of school aged children treated: 259,336

Activity Narrative

MDA for SCH and STH was successfully completed in the Guinea Conakry 3 Health Districts (HDs) project in April-May 2018.

Project activities began with the training of health workers, teachers and CDDs in the delivery of MDA. Community leaders were sensitised to the campaign and there was social mobilisation in the communities, including: district-level launching ceremonies, radio spots, round table discussions, town criers and mobile sound systems.

SCH/STH MDA was undertaken using different strategies to respond to different contexts. The school-based method is standard, however door-to-door and fixed-point strategies were utilized to mitigate against ongoing and repeated teachers strikes.

Sightsavers contributed to the update of the Guinea NTD Masterplan, an advanced version of which was shared with partners in January 2019. The final version of the plan is awaiting sign-off from the MoH.

Results against targets to date (April 2018 – March 2019)

Output	Indicator	Year 2 target	Year 2 to date
Train health staff, community members and teachers to deliver SCH/STH MDA to schools and endemic communities	No. of Teachers trained on SCH/STH MDA	1,118	1,118
	No. of health workers trained on SCH/STH MDA	64	64
	No. of CDDs trained on SCH/STH MDA	1,192	1,192
	No. of schools training at least one classroom teacher on school MDA.	559	559
a) Treat school aged children between 5-15 years for STH and for SCH through MDA	No. of school age children between 5-15 years treated for STH	139,685	*259,336
	No. of school age children between 5-15 years treated for SCH	139,685	259,336
b) Treat adults for STH and for SCH through MDA where prevalence rates dictate.	No. of adults treated for STH via MDA	307,307	*286,988
	No. of adults treated for SCH via MDA	307,307	286,988
	No. of treatment coverage surveys conducted with data disaggregated by age group and gender and school attendance.	1	1
Ministry of Health coordinates and supports targeted regions/districts to implement the National NTD Plan with focus on SCH and STH.	No. of advocacy meetings conducted with stakeholders on SCH/STH Interventions.	2	2

* Includes 42,104 school aged children and 47,122 adults treated in Yomou. Yomou had a prevalence rate of just under 20%, however as in previous years, the MoH policy is to add STH wherever SCH is being treated.

School vs community based treatments

In this round of MDA, roughly 60% of treatments given to children were distributed in schools, with the remaining 40% distributed in the community.

Treatment coverage rates

Outcome Indicator	Year 2 April 2018 – March 2019	
	Milestone	Achieved
% of all targeted school aged children among targeted health districts treated for SCH (ultimate threshold at least 75%)	50%	139%
% of all targeted school aged children among targeted districts treated with at least one round of albendazole/mebendazole against STH (ultimate threshold at least 75%).	50%	139%
% of existing schools among targeted health districts participating in the school deworming programme.	100%	100%

The coverage rates over 100% are explained by an underestimation of the population. The population targets come from the 2014 general census of the Ministry of Planning with a population inflator applied. The census results are used as the denominator by all health programmes, as insisted by the government.

Key Successes:

- The number of schools reached in year 1 was used as the new target for year 2 – this gave an accurate school target for the project to aim toward;
- All training targets were met and targets for children treated for SCH/STH were greatly exceeded;
- The monitoring visit to N'zérékoré showed the QSAT action plan was being successfully implemented.

Key Challenges:

- Fewer high-risk adults were treated than planned because CDDs had previously only treated SACs and they were not fully briefed on the new initiative. Future trainings will emphasise the importance of treating adults in the N'zérékoré region, given the high prevalence (> 50%);
- The national NTD programme requires us to use 2014 population data as a denominator despite the fact we know it to be an under-estimation. The use of these figures gives an unrealistically high treatment coverage.

Project monitoring and coverage survey activity

Field monitoring and supervision was conducted at multiple levels (community, district, regional) to ensure the quality of the MDA. This included members of the Sightsavers team, MoH¹ and MoE².

The TCS was conducted in N'Zérékoré and Lola districts in June 2018. In total, 3,304 people from 1,466 randomly selected households, from 57 villages were interviewed. Survey coverage of combined treatments was 78.0%. The reported coverage declared by the programme was 90.9% in Lola and 92.6% in N'Zérékoré, while the treatment coverage survey results were 80.1% for Lola and 76.3% for

¹ National NTD programme (PNLOC/MTN), Regional Directorate of Health, Prefectural Directorate of Health, Head of Health Centre

² Service National de Santé Scolaire et Universitaire, Inspecteur Régional de l'Éducation, Directeur Prefectural de l'Éducation, Directeur Sous-Prefecturale de l'Enseignement Élémentaire

N'Zérékoré. Despite these discrepancies, the MDA and TCS results were considered valid because the districts to have exceeded the 75% minimum coverage threshold recommended by WHO for SCH and STH interventions.

The survey results also demonstrated that 59.4% of children were treated in school settings, which was consistent with nationally reported data.

Actions from the December 2017 QSAT are being followed-up through monitoring visits to the region, the most recent being in August 2018. Some of the actions undertaken in the visit were harmonisation of a report supervision template; archiving all electronic and hard reports; and working on reverse drug logistics (returning of and accounting for unused drugs after the MDA).

Lessons learned

Monitoring visits to the Lola district found that the door-to-door strategy for community MDA in some villages was not effective, with the distributors instead opting for a fixed-point strategy. This will be taken into account for future planning, to make sure that community mobilisation focusses on the fixed-point approach.

Looking ahead to 2019

The treatment of adults in SCH high prevalence (>50%) districts is dependent on drugs being made available. Whilst the drug donator (Merck) will allow donations for adults, it only donates a set amount of praziquantal (PZQ) a year and orders for school aged children will always be prioritised. Should Guinea not receive the 2019 PZQ allocation it has requested for adults, the treatments will not be delivered.

Wishlist 3 funding will extend this project until March 2022. We hope to continue the excellent programme performance treating school aged children and continue to build on the recommendations from the QSAT action plan.

As stated in wishlist 3, four health districts within the Nzérékoré region have STH prevalence above 50%. In line with WHO guidance, the MoH identified the need to start biannual STH MDA to reduce prevalence and intensity over time; this need is being addressed with GiveWell funding.

Sightsavers are already delivering the first SCH and STH treatment in Nzérékoré health district. This will see us expand the existing STH MDA here from once to twice a year.

The other three health districts (Beyla, Guéckédou, Macenta) were not previously covered by Sightsavers. They receive their first STH treatment incidentally via LF MDA provided by HKI who also provide SCH treatment for SAC in these districts. Sightsavers are now providing the second STH treatments in these districts.