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RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE MASS TREATMENT OF TRACHOMA: MONITORING COVERAGE AND PRACTICES OF MASS DRUG ADMINISTRATION (MDA) IN YEMEN- FOLLOW-UP STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Background: Trachoma is a communicable infection of the eye by certain strains of the *Chlamydia trachomatis*. It is the principal cause of loss of sight globally. Mass drug administration (MDA) with Azithromycin is a foundation stone of World Health Organization (WHO)'s global struggle to eradicate trachoma by 2020.

Aims: The main objectives of the campaign's third monitoring are to check improvement of interventions and improvement of quality across times and activities implemented in seven selected districts of Ibb and Al-Hodeida governorates, Yemen.

Methods: A community based cross-sectional coverage survey was performed. 68 divisions were selected per selected districts of the two governorates. A disconnect Results Entry Form for each district surveyed was finished, saved and uploaded directly into the online Coverage Survey Analysis Tool to check improvement of interventions and improvement of quality across times and activities implemented.

Results: The national campaign for MDA covers 966 villages in 6 districts of Ibb and Al-Hodeidah governorates by 1932 healthcare workers. A total number of beneficiaries who were monitored from 476 homes reached 3,077, of whom 2,755 (90%, coverage rate) took the dose. The availability rates of trachoma medicines were ranged from 82% to 91%. The improper arrangement of treatment sessions rate was 17%, the incorrect position of the dose pole was 6%, while the correct records of drugs scored the rate of 99%, and the proper storage of drugs rate was 70%. The community collaboration during the treatment campaign the acceptable rate was 92%, while 3% exhibited unacceptable behaviors towards the treatment campaign.

Conclusion: In this survey, the national campaign for MDA in the 966 villages reach the target threshold (i.e. 90%) for effective coverage; with proper rates for the availability of trachoma medicines, good people reactions towards taking treatment, and the community collaboration; while bad rates for the improper arrangement of treatment sessions, the incorrect position of the dose pole and the preparation dosages by MDA team. Hence, programmatic enhancement should be made for the future campaign to achieve the estimated thresholds.

Keywords: Coverage, mass drug administration (MDA), mass treatment, monitoring, national campaign, trachoma, Yemen.

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INTRODUCTION

Trachoma is an infectious eye infection produced by certain strains of the *Chlamydia trachomatis* bacteria. Active infection frequently starts at some stage in infancy or childhood and can become chronic. The bacteria are distributed by direct connection with eye and nasal secretions from infected individuals, or by

contact with fomites (that is, nonliving objects that carry infectious agents, for example towels or washcloths) or by eye-seeking flies (mainly *Musca sorbens*). It is the main contagious cause of blindness and is endemic in 53 countries. An estimated 325 million people live in areas where they could be exposed to trachoma, and more than 7 million suffer from trichiasis, the last painful stage of this eye