

# Using the role model approach to identify best practices and challenges during seasonal malaria chemoprevention drug administration in Burkina Faso

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## Introduction

Seasonal malaria chemoprevention (SMC) is a community-based intervention used in Burkina Faso to reduce malaria morbidity and mortality in children under five. SMC involves the administration of monthly courses of the antimalarial medicines sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine (SP) and amodiaquine (AQ), or 'SPAQ'. Caregivers often find it difficult to administer SPAQ without the support of a community distributor. This study aimed to identify and promote good behaviours within communities that improve the administration of SMC medicines without supervision.

## Methods

- The study took place from June 2021 to February 2022 in three villages served by one health facility in the health district of Saponé, located in the Centre-Sud region of Burkina Faso (Figure 1).
- This qualitative study identified positive behaviours through 19 focus group discussions (FGDs) and 17 key informant interviews (KIIs) with caregivers (male and female) and community distributors.
- Monthly sessions were conducted by community volunteers who were trained to promote desirable ('role model') behaviours in their communities.

## Results

- We identified several positive role model behaviours related to SPAQ administration, including:
  - caregivers' incentivising children with candy, biscuits or fruit juice to ensure they take the medicine
  - setting reminders for primary caregivers to administer SMC medicines through the involvement of spouses, grandparents, in-laws or neighbours.
- We also identified some negative practices, including:
  - mixing SPAQ with food or drinks (usually with porridge or tea) when it should only be mixed with water
  - using overly forceful methods to make the child take the medicines.

## Conclusion

Incentivising children and encouraging the setting of reminders to administer caregivers for SPAQ were seen to improve the administration of SMC medicines. To promote these good practices, posters were developed and used to sensitise caregivers in health facilities in the study district during the 2022 SMC round. Identifying volunteers initially posed a challenge; however, the involvement of community leaders allowed us to solve this issue. Further studies could explore the extent to which medicines mixed with food and/or drink other than water affects the efficacy of the drugs used for malaria chemoprevention.

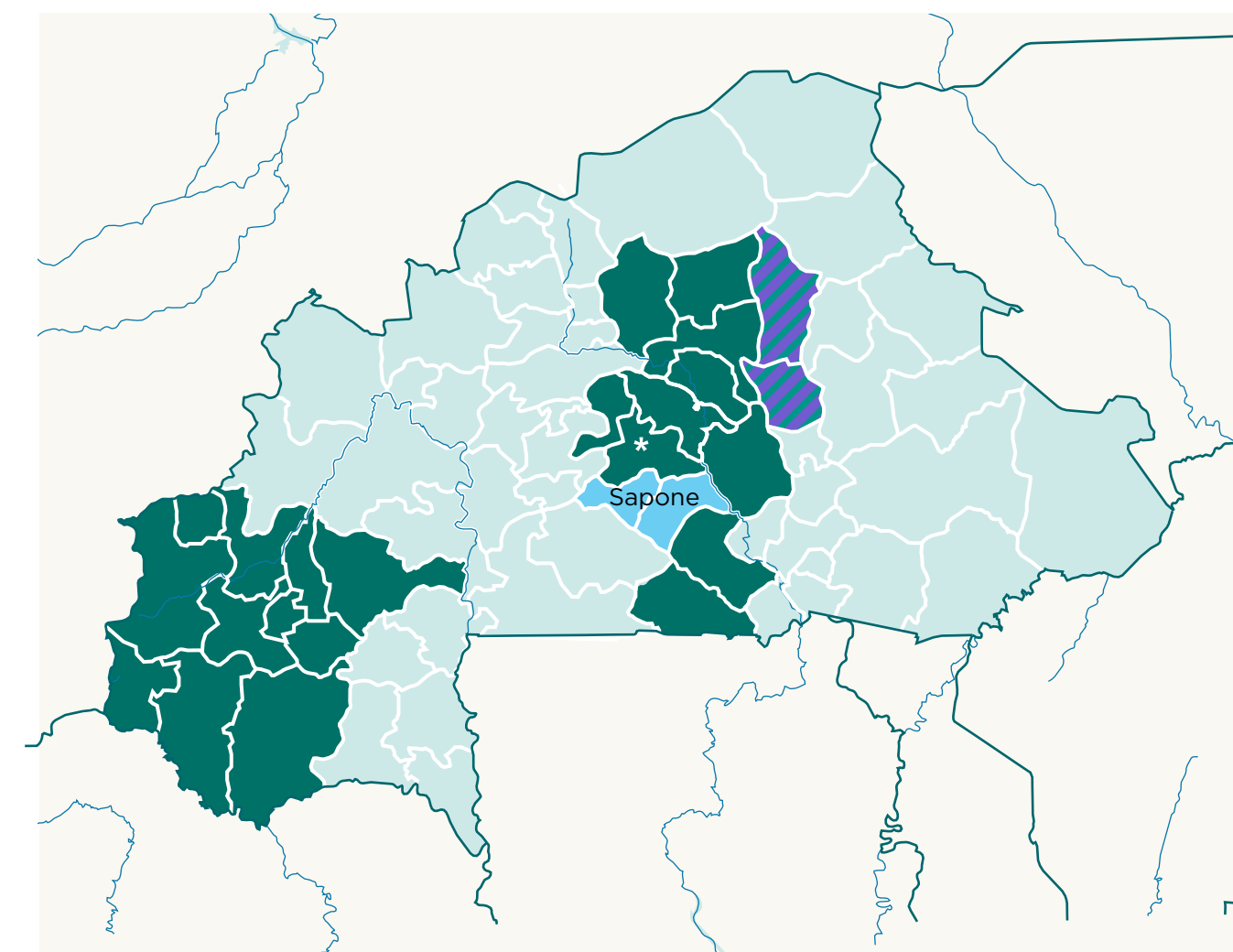
## Reference

1. World Health Organization. *World malaria report 2021*. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2021.

Through the role model approach, several identified behaviours in the community helped to improve the administration of SMC medicines

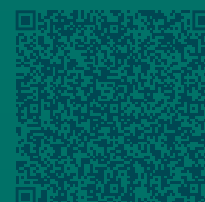
## Supplementary visual

Figure 1: Study location in Saponé, Central-Sud region, Burkina Faso



- Philanthropic funding
- UNICEF and philanthropic funding
- Study location
- ✦ Malaria Consortium office

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