Assessing the impact of seasonal malaria chemoprevention on suspected and confirmed malaria cases in Chad using routine clinical data, 2013–2018

Sol Richardson
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Introduction
Seasonal malaria chemoprevention

- Malaria Consortium supports SMC administration using sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine plus amodiaquine to children 3–59 months at monthly intervals to provide protection against *Plasmodium falciparum* malaria during the annual high-transmission season.

- Recommended by the World Health Organization in areas of highly seasonal transmission and low prevalence of resistance alleles.

- Randomised controlled trials suggest preventive efficacy is ~74 percent.\[1\]

SMC in the Sahel (2019)

Source: London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine. OPT-SMC, [2020; cited 2020 Sep 28].
### SMC in eligible districts of Chad (2013–2018)

SMC implementers in Chad by year and number of districts supported

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Chadian NMCP</th>
<th>ACCES-SMC</th>
<th>Malaria Consortium</th>
<th>UNICEF</th>
<th>Global Fund</th>
<th>Croix Rouge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
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<td>14</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2018</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ACCESS-SMC**: Achieving Catalytic Expansion of Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention in the Sahel (with support from Malaria Consortium)

**NMCP**: National Malaria Control Programme

**UNICEF**: United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
SMC in Chad (2018 to present)

- Using philanthropic funding, Malaria Consortium has continued to support SMC since 2018.
- In 2020, Malaria Consortium-supported SMC campaigns targeted treatment of 960,000 eligible children 3–59 months across 20 health districts.
- SMC in Chad received continuing support from the Global Fund and UNICEF since 2018.
Study aim and objectives

• **Aim**: to generate evidence on the impact of SMC at scale.

• **Objectives**: to investigate associations between SMC and
  
  o district-level rates of suspected malaria cases in eligible children

  o district-level rates of confirmed malaria cases in eligible children.
Methods
Data sources

- Chadian Health Management Information System (HMIS) (2013–2018), compiled by the Chadian NMCP
- 2019 district-level population projections provided by the Chadian Ministry of Health’s Department of Health Statistics
- Climatic data provided by the Chadian National Meteorological Agency, and the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) (2014) not employed in analysis.
• In 2013, 44 of 72 health districts in Chad were eligible for SMC.

• During 2015–2018, larger districts were subdivided, resulting in a total of 118 districts (of which 75 were eligible and 43 non-eligible).

• SMC was implemented in at least one season in 23 of 44 eligible (2013) health districts across Chad during 2013–2018.

  o Total 2013 population of children 0–59 months: 1.03 million.
Climate and seasonality of sampled districts

Chad map of Köppen climate classification

Map of health districts with SMC campaigns, 2013–2018

Source: [Wikimedia Commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org). [2016; cited 2020 Sep 29].
Outcome measures

- We used monthly district-level HMIS data on malaria cases among children 0–59 months in health districts with SMC administration, in at least one high-transmission season.

- Two models were fitted:
  1. Suspected cases (in primary care facilities)
  2. Confirmed cases (in primary care facilities, by rapid diagnostic testing or microscopy).
Model specification

• We fitted generalised additive mixed models using a quasi-Poisson link function for count outcomes (cases/month).

• Year and (2013) health districts were fitted as random effects (with years nested within health districts).

• Cyclic cubic spline terms were fitted individually by health district on month to adjust for seasonality of malaria cases.
  
  o Estimated degrees of freedom and p values were calculated.
• Models used a log-transformed offset term to account for district-level population change and proportion of clinics reporting suspected and confirmed cases.

• The primary exposure, SMC administration, was fitted as a binary variable with ‘1’ corresponding to the expected period of protection (July–October inclusive).

• Results were expressed as rate ratios (RR) for monthly cases.
Results and discussion
### Bousso district: Suspected and confirmed cases per 1,000 children 0–59 months (2013–2018)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date (months)</th>
<th>Monthly suspected cases per 1,000 Children (0-59 months)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 2013</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 2013</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 2014</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 2014</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 2015</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 2015</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 2016</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 2016</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 2017</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 2017</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 2018</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 2018</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 2019</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Grey**: Protective period of SMC administration
- **Solid line**: Monthly suspected cases per 1,000
- **Dashed line**: Monthly confirmed cases per 1,000
Mangalmé district: Suspected and confirmed cases per 1,000 children 0–59 months (2013–2018)
Massakory district: Suspected and confirmed cases per 1,000 children 0–59 months (2013–2018)
N’Djaména Est district: Suspected and confirmed cases per 1,000 children 0–59 months (2013–2018)
Bousso district: Suspected cases, plot of smooth term

Estimated degrees of freedom (EDF)=2.45
p=0.024

- **Solid line:** Cyclic cubic smoothing term
- **Dashed line:** 95 percent confidence interval (95 percent CI)
- **Horizontal line:** District-level mean rate of cases
Bousso district: Confirmed cases, plot of smooth term

EDF=2.59
p=0.004
Mangalmé district: Suspected cases, plot of smooth term

EDF=2.96
p<0.001
Mangalmé district: Confirmed cases, plot of smooth term

EDF=2.84, 
\( p<0.001 \)
Massakory district: Suspected cases, plot of smooth term

EDF=4.66
p<0.001
Massakory district: Confirmed cases, plot of smooth term

EDF=4.71
p<0.001
N’Djaména Est district: Suspected cases, plot of smooth term

EDF=3.13
p=0.74
N’Djaména Est district: Confirmed cases, plot of smooth term

EDF=3.32
p=0.11
Model results (SMC administration)

- **Model 1 (suspected cases)**
  - RR: 0.82, 95% CI: 0.72–0.94, p=0.006
    - 18 percent reduction in suspected cases reported at primary health facilities.

- **Model 2 (confirmed cases)**
  - RR: 0.81, 95% CI: 0.71–0.93, p=0.003
    - 19 percent reduction in confirmed cases reported at primary health facilities.
Limitations

• Lack of usable covariate data necessitated the use of random effects and spline terms to account for seasonality.
  
  o Models explained over 80 percent of variance in the two outcomes.

• Estimated ~20 percent effectiveness (based on RR) was substantially below the assumed 74 percent efficacy of SMC.
  
  o Not all malaria cases are reported at primary health facilities.

  o The outcomes related to children 0–59 months; this may have underestimated effect sizes as children 0–2 months were not treated but their cases were included in the outcome.
Issues and next steps

**Issues**

- data quality
- missing information

**Next steps**

- sensitivity analyses
- data quality audit
- evidence from other countries (e.g. using a regression discontinuity approach to investigate association of age-specific incidence rate ratios of malaria cases based on routine data in Mozambique).
Acknowledgements

Co-authors: Azoukalne Moukenet,1 Arantxa Roca-Feltrer,2 Monica Anna de Cola,2 Zana Coulibaly1

1Malaria Consortium Chad
2Malaria Consortium

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Thank you

www.malariaconsortium.org