



EDCTP

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OPT-SMC World Malaria Day 2022 Newsletter



The OPT-SMC project

The OPT-SMC project aims to strengthen the capacity of National Malaria Programmes (NMP) in conducting implementation research with the goal of optimizing Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention. The project is funded by the European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) and coordinated by the University of Thiès, Senegal in collaboration with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK, TDR, and Medicines for Malaria Venture, Switzerland, as well as the NMPs of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, The Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo.

News!



SMC is 10 years old!

Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, following its publication by the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Malaria Programme (GMP) in March 2012. The intervention has grown over the years and now reaches 13 countries in the Sahel region of Africa, where about 44 million children were reached with SMC in 2021, thanks to the leadership of NMPs and support from national and international partners, reunited within the SMC Alliance.



OPT-SMC team conducts capacity-building assessment

An evaluation of the capacities of the NMPs for conducting operational/implementation research is currently being conducted to develop a capacity strengthening research training programme for 2022-23 that fits NMPs' needs.



OPT-SMC team and partners collaborate to develop a DHIS2-SMC module

The OPT-SMC team is collaborating with WHO GMP and the University of Oslo to develop a DHIS2-SMC module that will facilitate the analysis of SMC implementation at national and subnational level in a standardized way.

Event highlights



The SMC Alliance hosts its annual meeting

On the 1st, 2nd and 3rd of March 2022, the SMC Alliance hosted its annual meeting virtually. Over 150 participants were in attendance. OPT-SMC country partners, Nigeria and Guinea provided updates on their OPT-SMC projects.



TDR, the OPT-SMC team, and partners host 1st workshop on the introduction of RTS,S vaccine

The 1st workshop on the introduction of the RTS,S malaria vaccine was co-organized by TDR, the OPT-SMC team, WHO and the Access and Delivery Partnership on the 24th of February, 2022. The event shed light on the roll-out of the RTS,S vaccine within other routine malaria interventions.

OPT - SMC Country Updates

Completed Projects



NMPs of Ghana, Guinea and Nigeria complete OPT-SMC projects

Congratulations to the NMP teams of Ghana, Guinea and Nigeria, who have completed their OPT-SMC projects and submitted abstracts on the projects' results. Research papers are being developed on the projects results.

Ongoing Projects



Mali: Evaluating the quality of drug administration for SMC

This study will compare classic SMC delivery (drug distributor visits on the first day and leaves the drugs with the caregivers) versus Directly Observed Therapy for three days by the drug distributor and SMC-plus (drug distributor visits on the first day, then a community helper visits on 2nd and 3rd days). The team is in the process of selecting the three study sites for the project.



Niger: Adapting the target groups for SMC in Niger

The project will analyze district level malaria morbidity data for the past five years to explore age specific trends. The team is currently working on developing data collection tools.



Benin: Case-control study to assess the effectiveness of SMC

A case control study was carried out in the municipalities of Malanville, Karimama, Kandi Gogounou and Ségbana in Alibori district in Northern Benin to assess the effectiveness of SMC treatments. The team has completed collecting the data and is now analyzing the data.

Planned projects



Upcoming projects in Burkina Faso, Senegal, Togo, Cameroon, The Gambia and Chad

The NMPs of Burkina Faso, Senegal, Togo, Cameroon, The Gambia and Chad are developing their proposals for projects, including studies on cost-effective modelling, promoting adherence, improving the quality of SMC delivery, qualitative research on barriers to SMC uptake, and country stratification in terms of number of cycles and age range.

Field-based meetings



Visits to Guinea-Bissau and Chad

Prof. Jean-Louis Ndiaye of the University of Thiès and Dr. Andre-Marie Tchouatieu of MMV visited the NMPs in Guinea Bissau and Chad to discuss the progress of the OPT-SMC project. The objectives included discussing field experience and challenges faced by the NMPs in implementing SMC. Based on these discussions, research questions were identified alongside the identification of local research partners, with whom dialogues were had.



Visit to the University of Thiès

Dr André Tchouatieu of MMV and Prof. Paul Milligan of LSHTM visited the project team at the University of Thiès in Senegal. After almost 1.5 years of project implementation within the COVID-19 context and with travel restrictions, it was an opportunity to physically meet the team and reinforce the team spirit created virtually and provide support to the project.

Publications



[Introducing field digital data collection systems into seasonal malaria chemoprevention campaigns: opportunities for robust evidence development and national e-health strategies](#)

This article discusses the use of digital tools for collecting field data for SMC campaigns in Benin, the Gambia, Ghana and Nigeria.



[Redoubling efforts to sustain seasonal malaria chemoprevention](#)

This article advocates for increased and expanded national funding from African nations to sustain and complement international funding for SMC and malaria programmes.

Upcoming events



- **Workshop on OPT-SMC / SMC data in the DHIS2 and workshop for analyzing malaria data.** The date will be communicated shortly.
- **Capacity strengthening research training programme.** The date will be communicated at a later date.

