



Tafea, Sanma and Shefa Mass Campaign for Neglected Tropical Disease Mass Drug Administration & Survey, 2021-2023

Ms Prudence Rymill¹, Mrs Mackline Garae¹, Ms Brigit Malisa¹, Mrs Estelle Paniel¹, Mr Ruatu Sapa², Mr Peter Lenis¹, Mr Mark Boe², Mrs Salometh Kenneth², Ms Stephanie Tabe¹, Mrs Fasahah Taleo³, Ms Elizabeth Nguyen⁴, Mr Md Saiful Islam⁵, Mrs Clare Dyer⁴, Mr David Kennedy⁴, Mrs Susana Vaz Nery⁴

¹Neglected Tropical Disease, Port Vila, Vanuatu. ²Neglected Tropical D, Port Vila, Vanuatu. ³World Health Organization, Port Vila, Vanuatu, Port Vila, Vanuatu. ⁴Kirby Institute, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia. ⁵Kirby Institute, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia, Sydney, Australia

Abstract text

Background: Soil transmitted helminths, scabies and yaws are neglected tropical diseases endemic the 3 provinces, Tafea, Shefa and Sanma. To control and eliminate these NTDs, the Vanuatu Ministry of Health, with the support of the non-profit organization Bridges to Development & WHO is implementing large-scale innovative integrated control programs including two rounds of mass drug administration with albendazole, azithromycin and ivermectin, concurrent with active surveillance of yaws and leprosy. The implementation of surveys integrated with MDA is a novel approach that allows more cost-efficient collection of data necessary to monitor and evaluate impact of the MDA and to reduce and controls the NTDs.

Methods: A mass drug administration and survey will be conducted in the 3 provinces. A team comprising of 4 members in an MDA team and 8 teams in a survey team who do NTD screening and treat all the communities and Cross-sectional parasitological surveys will be conducted before and after MDA to assess its impact. At the time of writing, baseline prevalence surveys were carried out in 132 villages across three provinces: Tafea, Sanma, and Shefa between 2021-2023. The aim was to perform skin examinations on 100 residents and collect 50 stool samples per village.

Results: Sanma has the highest coverages followed by Shefa and then Tafea provinces. A total of 8,552 individuals participated in the survey. Sanma collected the highest stool samples, followed by Shefa and Tafea province. Skin examinations found scabies prevalence of 14.0% in Tafea, 2.6% in Sanma, and 4.1% in Shefa.

Discussion: Our study suggests that there is a high prevalence of STH and skin diseases among the three provinces. Tafea has the low coverage was because it is the first to pilot the 3 drugs and survey and during the time a lot of communities confuse the medication with covid -19 vaccine.