



Assessing the Policy Impact of Community-Based Hygiene Promotion on Trachoma Prevalence in Hyperendemic Amhara, Ethiopia: A 2005 Analysis

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Published: 01 December 2005 | **Received:** 20 June 2005 | **Accepted:** 09 October 2005

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18528774](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18528774)

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Abstract

Trachoma remains a leading cause of preventable blindness in Ethiopia, with the Amhara region historically hyperendemic. Community-based hygiene promotion is a core component of the SAFE strategy, but its specific impact in this context required clearer analysis for policy development. This analysis aimed to quantify the impact of a community-based participatory hygiene promotion programme on the prevalence of active trachoma (trachomatous inflammation—follicular) in hyperendemic districts of Amhara, Ethiopia, and to derive policy implications. The study conducted a retrospective review of programme data and prevalence surveys from selected hyperendemic districts. A comparative analysis between intervention and non-intervention areas assessed changes in trachoma follicular prevalence attributable to hygiene promotion. Districts with sustained community-based hygiene promotion showed a substantially greater reduction in trachoma follicular prevalence compared to control areas. The reduction in prevalence was approximately 40% greater in intervention districts. Community-based participatory hygiene promotion is an effective intervention for reducing active trachoma in hyperendemic settings. This confirms its critical role within the SAFE strategy and underscores the need for dedicated policy and resources for community-driven components. Ethiopian health policy should institutionalise dedicated funding for community-based hygiene promotion. Programmes must emphasise participatory design, long-term sustainability, and integration with other SAFE components. Scaling up this model to other hyperendemic regions is advised. trachoma, hygiene promotion, health policy, neglected tropical diseases, community health, Ethiopia, Amhara, SAFE strategy This analysis provides evidence for policymakers on the measurable impact of community-based hygiene promotion, supporting its prioritisation within national trachoma elimination strategies.

Keywords: *Trachoma, Hygiene Promotion, SAFE Strategy, Amhara Region, Community-Based Participatory Research, Neglected Tropical Diseases*

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