



Impact of a Community-Led Sanitation Campaign on Trachoma Prevalence in Kongwa District, Tanzania: A Brief Report, 2008

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Abstract

Trachoma is a leading infectious cause of blindness. Environmental sanitation is a core component of the SAFE strategy for its elimination. Kongwa District in Tanzania is a trachoma-endemic area where community-based interventions are essential. This brief report aimed to assess the impact of a community-led total sanitation campaign on the prevalence of active trachoma among children under ten years old in Kongwa District. A cross-sectional survey was conducted in selected villages following a two-year community-led total sanitation campaign. The campaign promoted household latrine construction and use, alongside improved facial and environmental hygiene. Active trachoma was assessed using the WHO simplified grading system. Prevalence data were compared with baseline survey figures from before the campaign. A reduction in the prevalence of active trachoma among children under ten was observed. The prevalence decreased from a baseline of 18.6% to 9.4% post-campaign in the intervention villages. The community-led sanitation campaign was associated with a marked reduction in active trachoma prevalence in this endemic district. This supports the environmental component of the SAFE strategy. Sustained support for community-led environmental sanitation is recommended within integrated trachoma elimination programmes. Further research should investigate the long-term sustainability of these gains. trachoma, community-led total sanitation, environmental health, public health, Tanzania, neglected tropical diseases This report provides field evidence on the contribution of community-driven environmental improvements to trachoma control in a sub-Saharan African setting.

Keywords: *Trachoma, SAFE strategy, Community-led total sanitation, Kongwa District, Tanzania, Neglected tropical diseases, Environmental health*

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