

Progress towards
eliminating onchocerciasis
in the WHO Region
of the Americas: advances
in mapping the Yanomami
focus area

Progrès vers l'élimination
de l'onchocercose dans
la Région OMS des Amériques:
progrès dans la cartographie
de la zone du foyer Yanomami

Onchocerciasis (river blindness) is caused
by the parasitic worm *Onchocerca volvulus*
which is transmitted by *Simulium* species
in rivers and streams. In the human host,
the parasite becomes encapsulated in subcutaneous

nodules, where it can be transmitted to
the next human host via subsequent
bites. The parasite has no environmental

reservoirs. In 1987, the World Bank
funded a project to control or eliminate onchocerciasis
in the Yanomami focus area in the
Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and
the state of Chiapas, Mexico.

The project was implemented by the
World Bank and the Bolivarian Republic
of Venezuela, with technical assistance
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The Yanomami focus area

7KH <)\$ LV WKH FURVV ERUGHU]RQH RI RQFKRFHUFLDVLV
WUDQVPLVLRQ FRPSULVLQJ WKH 6RXWK IRFXV RI WKH %ROLYDULDQ
5HSXEOLF RI 9HQH]XHOD DQG WKH \$PD]RQDV IRFXV RI %UD]LO
7KH <DQRPDPL DUH WKH QRPDGLF LQGLJHQRXV SHRSOH ZKR
live in communities scattered over approximately
230000 km² RI VDYDQQDK DQG \$PD]RQ UDLQIRUHVW DORQJ
WKH ERUGHU EHWZHHQ WKH WZRGIERXQWULHV \$ERXW
YLGXDOV OLYLQJ LQ "malocas" or YLOODJHV FDOOHG
"malocas" DUH WDUJHWHG IRUHV\ \$ \HDU ,Q
LYHUPHFVLQ WUHDWPHQWV ZHUH JLYHQ LQ WKH
<)\$ DV WZLFH D \HDU WUHDWPHQW DQG
WLPHV D \HDU WUHDWPHQW 7KH VXFFHVV ZLWK ZKLFK 0'\$
UHDFKHG WKH WUHDWPHQW JRDO GHSHQGHG RQ ORFDWLRQ
RI YLOODJHV WKH DYDLODELOLW\ RI UHVRXUFHV DQG LQIUDVWUXF
WXUH LQFOXGLQJ DLU WUDQVSRUW DQG ODQGLQJ VWULSV <DQR
PDPL PLJUDWRU\ SDWWHUQV DQG ZHDWKHU FRQGLWLRQV

,Q RUGHU WR DFKLHYH WKH SURJUDPPH\ GLVHDVH HOLPLQDWLRQ
JRDOV VHYHUDO LQLWLDWLYHV ZHUH ODXQFKHG LQ
LDQWKURSRORJLFDO VWXGLHV WR OHDUQ PRUH DERXW WKH
Yanomami (mobility patterns and community sociopo
OLWLFDO UHODWLRQV KLSV LL UHFUXLWPHQW DQG WUDLQLQJ RI
PRUH LQGLJHQRXV KHDOWK DJHQWV ,+\$V WR KHOS SURYLGH
ivermectin treatment and other health care; (iii) recovery
DQG PDLQWHQDQFH RI DLUVWULSV LQ WKH 9HQH]XHODQ 6RXWK
IRFXV DQG LY PHHWLQJV EHWZHHQ WKH QDWLRQDO
SURJUDPPHV WR EHWWHU GHÀQH WKH RQFKRFHUFLDVLV HQGHPLF
DUHD WR EH FRYHUHG \$Q DFFXUDWH SLFWXUH RI WKH <DQRPDPL
SRSXODWLRQ WDUJHWHG IRU RQFKRFHUFLDVLV WUHDWPHQW ZDV
GLIÀFXOW WR DFKLHYH DV WKHLU VHWWOHPHQWV DUH FKDQJLQJ
constantly in composition and mobility. In 2017, the
%UD]LOLDQ DQG 9HQH]XHODQ RQFKRFHUFLDVLV HOLPLQDWLRQ
SURJUDPPHV DJUHHG RQ DQ HVVHQWLDQ XSGDWH DQG GHWDLOHG
PDSV RI DOO FRPPXQLWLHV LQ WKH <)\$ LQFOXGLQJ JHRJUDSK
LFDO FRRUGLQDWHV WUHDWPHQW DQG HSLGHPLRORJLFDO GDWD
vector species, health posts, airstrips and mobility
SDWWHUQV ,Q RUGHU WR DPDOJDPDWH WKH GDWD FROOHFWHG
WKURXJK WKH \HDUV E\ WKH SURJUDPPHV RQ ERWK VLGHV RI
WKH ERUGHU WHFKQLFDO RQFKRFHUFLDVLV VWDII DQG JHRJUDSK
LFDO LQIRUPDWLRQ V\WHP *,6 H[SHUWV KHOG WZR PHHWLQJV
LQ WR FKRRVH D FRPPRQ *,6 SODWIRUP DQG WR XQL\
WKHLU GDWD 7KH PHHWLQJV ZHUH KHOG LQ *XDWHPDOD &LW\
*XDWHPDOD LQ -DQXDU\ DQG 5LR GH -DQHLUR %UD]LO LQ
0DUFK 7KH PHHWLQJV UHVXOWHG LQ DQ XSGDWHG GDWDEDVH
RI <)\$ FRPPXQLW\ FRRUGLQDWHV DQG WKHLU SUH 0'\$
HQGHPLF OHYHO L H K\SR HQGHPLF EDVHOLQH PLFURÀODULDH
SUHYDOHQFH ² PHV HQGHPLF ² DQG K\SHU
HQGHPLF • 7KH PDS FOHDUO\ VKRZV WKDW WKH HSLFHQ
WUH RI WKH <)\$ FURVVHV WKH LQWHUQDWLRQDO ERUGHU 7KH
SURJUDPPHV FRPPLWWHG WKHPVHOYHV WR FRQLQXH
FROODERUDWLRQ DQG FROOHFWLRQ DQG VKDULQJ RI GDWD DW OHDVW
DQXDOO\ WR HQVXUH WKDW WKH MRLQW *,6 SODWIRUP LV FRQLQ
ually updated.

Editorial note

7KH FRPPRQ PDSSLQJ V\WHP XVHG WKLV \HDU LV DQ
LPSRUWDQW QHZ WRRO IRU EUHDNLQJ WUDQVPLVLRQ DQG
FRRUGLQDWLRQ WKH KDOWLQJ RI 0'\$ OPKQJ RI p0,
