

ABSTRACT

Background: Lymphatic filariasis (LF) is still prevalent in various regions of Nepal. Mass drug administration (MDA) was launched in Nepal in 2003 to eliminate LF through preventive chemotherapy. In some areas, the effective coverage was lower and resulted in inadequate desired impact on the microfilariae parasite population in humans. As a result, the intervention had to be given continuity for more than recommended cycle after some of the districts failed to pass the transmission assessment survey. The study was done to understand the dynamic of MDA treatment modalities in terms of acceptability of intervention by both the community people and the stakeholders.

Objectives: To explore the acceptability of MDA intervention among the stakeholders and community people in Dang district of Nepal.

Methods: We used the acceptability framework and the qualitative study design to explore the retrospective acceptability of MDA intervention among community people and stakeholders. The exploration of the acceptability of MDA intervention was investigated through the 9 key informant interviews (KII), 14 in depth interviews, and FGDs with stakeholders and community people. Purposive sampling was applied to select participants for the study. Thematic analysis of the obtained qualitative data was done deductively based on a guiding framework for the interpretation of the study findings.

Results: Overall, both the community people and stakeholders do have mixed perception towards acceptability of MDA intervention. Stakeholders and community people found the intervention appropriate for participation based on the observed impact of the intervention, positive attitude, and understanding of the intervention. However, the stakeholder did find the intervention bothersome due to issues such as workload, unavailability of people during distribution, and hamper on their regular tasks, and for the community, it is fear of side effects and less perceived threat of infection that hinders them from accepting the MDA intervention.

Conclusion: MDA interventions have the potential to be highly effective in combating lymphatic filariasis but there are several challenges to their acceptability for successful implementation. Effective implementation of MDA intervention requires clearly defined strategies to mitigate those challenges. The responsibility to make the MDA intervention successful must be bear by everyone and requires collaboration of government organizations, private sectors, non-government organizations, and the public to eliminate LF in a coordinated manner.

Keywords: *LF, MDA, acceptability, thematic, Nepal*