

## Publication

### Baseline health conditions in selected communities of northern Sierra Leone as revealed by the health impact assessment of a biofuel project

#### JournalArticle (Originalarbeit in einer wissenschaftlichen Zeitschrift)

**ID** 2720231

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**Year** 2014

**Title** Baseline health conditions in selected communities of northern Sierra Leone as revealed by the health impact assessment of a biofuel project

**Journal** International health

**Volume** 6

**Number** 3

**Pages / Article-Number** 232-41

**Keywords** Anaemia, Health impact assessment, Helminth infection, Malaria, Nutritional status, Sierra Leone

As biofuel projects may be associated with positive and negative effects on people's health and wellbeing, a health impact assessment was performed for the Addax Bioenergy Sierra Leone (ABSL) project. We present data from the baseline health survey, which will provide a point of departure for future monitoring and evaluation activities.; In December 2010, a cross-sectional survey was carried out in eight potentially affected communities. A broad set of clinical and parasitological indicators were assessed using standardised, quality-controlled procedures, including anthropometry and prevalence of anaemia, Plasmodium falciparum and helminth infections.; Complete datasets were obtained from 1221 individuals of 194 households and eight schools. Of children aged <5 years (n=586), 41.8% were stunted, 23.2% were underweight and 4.8% were wasted. Very high prevalences of anaemia and P. falciparum were found in children aged 6-59 months (n=571; 86.1% and 74.0%, respectively). Overall, 73.7% of women of reproductive age (n=395) were anaemic. In school-aged children (n=240), 27.9% had light-to moderate-intensity hookworm infections, whereas Ascaris lumbricoides, Trichuris trichiura and Schistosoma mansoni were rare (<3% each).; The detailed description of the baseline health conditions, in combination with future health surveys, will deepen the understanding of how a biofuel project impacts on community health in a rural setting in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Publisher** Elsevier

**ISSN/ISBN** 1876-3413

**edoc-URL** <http://edoc.unibas.ch/dok/A6308429>

**Full Text on edoc** No;

**Digital Object Identifier DOI** 10.1093/inthealth/ihu031

**PubMed ID** <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24984863>

**ISI-Number** WOS:000342219600014

**Document type (ISI)** Journal Article