



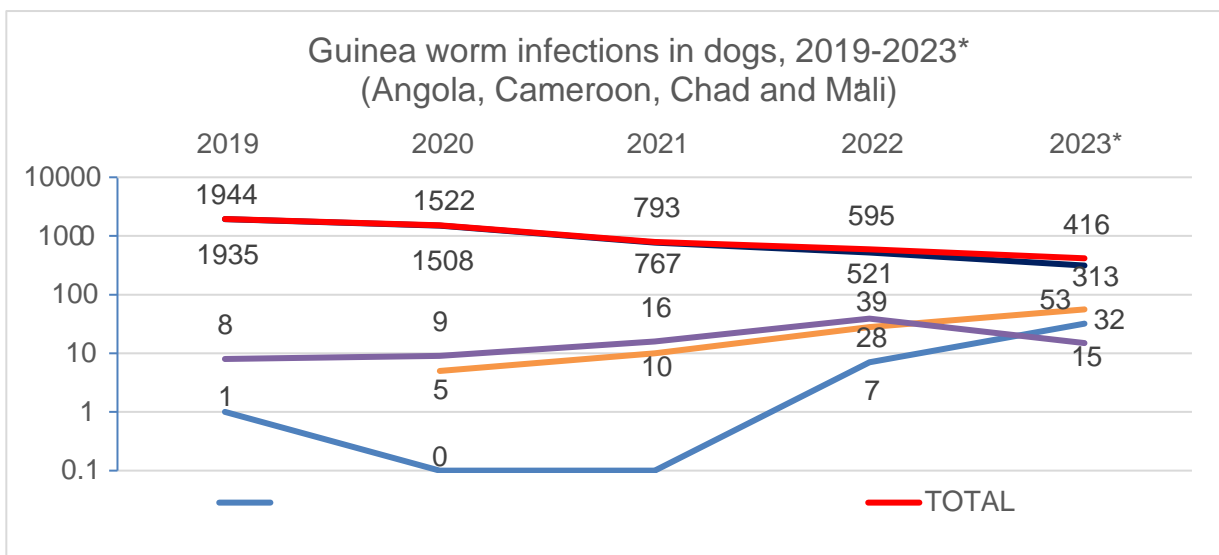
Date: September 29, 2023
From: WHO Collaborating Center for Dracunculiasis Eradication, CDC
Subject: GUINEA WORM WRAPUP #302
To: Addressees

“He wasn’t asking about politics or the economy.
 He just wanted to know what the Guinea worm count was.”
 (Carter Center CEO Paige Alexander, describing a telephone conversation with President Carter shortly before his 99th birthday)

HUMAN CASES -33%, DOG INFECTIONS -11% IN JANUARY- AUGUST 2023

Programs have provisionally reported 6 Guinea worm cases (67% contained) in January-August 2023, compared to 9 cases in humans in January-August 2022, which is a 33% reduction in human cases so far this year. Animal infections declined by only 10%, from 528 to 475 provisional infections (73% contained) during the same period, including an 11% reduction in dog infections, from 459 to 413 (contained). Significant increases in confirmed GW infected dogs in Angola (from 7 to 32) and Cameroon (from 27 to 53) masks Chad’s 24% reduction in dog infections (from 14 to 313) during this period (Figure 1). This is the fourth successive year that Chad has reduced dog infections (21% in 2020, 49% in 2021, 32% in 2022, 24% in 2023 so far). In 2022, Chad reported Guinea worm infections in 21 districts, while Mali and South Sudan each reported infections in only 4 districts, Angola and Ethiopia in 2 districts, and Cameroon in 1 district. Mali and South Sudan also reported that surveillance and interventions were constrained by insecurity in some affected areas. As Figure 2 illustrates, the main GW transmission seasons in Angola, Cameroon, Chad, Ethiopia, Mali, and South Sudan differ, with peak transmission typically extending through September in Chad and Mali, and through October in South Sudan. Table 3 in the previous issue Guinea Worm Wrapup (#301) summarizes the number of dog infections reported by country and by month during 2022 with the proportion of infections that countries reported contained. Table 2 in this issue shows similar data for countries during January-August 2023.

Figure 1



Detect every GW infection immediately. Contain every GW. Find the source of every GW infection.

CAMEROON: ONE HUMAN CASE CONFIRMED

Laboratory tests carried out by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have confirmed a case of Guinea worm disease in a 7-year-old girl, a goat farmer in the village of Naiguissia, in the arrondissement of Guere, in the Far North region of Cameroon. The first of her two worms appeared on 1st May 2023, and she was taken to the health center for isolation. Her infection was detected early, three days before the first worm appeared, and appears to have been contained, but the source of her infection is unknown. She had a history of travel to a community bordering Chad in the 8 months prior to the appearance of the first worm. The program subsequently treated four ponds around the girl's home with Abate.

The suspected case of Guinea worm in a 67-year-old farmer in the village of Massoutweita, near Nouldaina, which was reported in July this year (see Guinea Worm Update 300) was not Guinea worm.

Cameroon has reported confirmed Guinea worm infections in 53 dogs (98% believed to be contained) so far in 2023, out of 244 dog specimens and 5 cat specimens, some of which are still awaiting laboratory examination at University of Georgia Athens. These infections all occurred in the district of Guere, in the Far North region of Cameroon, on one side of the Logone river, which faces the endemic district of Bongor, in the Chadian province of Mayo Kebbi East. The families living on either side of the border in the two districts form a single epidemiological unit, travelling back and forth with their dogs and sharing markets, etc. Twelve years after Cameroon was certified free of Guinea worm in 2007, this district of Cameroon reported 1 human case in 2019; 1 human case, 1 infected cat and 5 infected dogs in 2020; 10 canine infections in 2021; and 28 canine infections in 2022. (The number of infected dogs in the neighboring district of Bongor, Chad, also increased each year in 2021-5, 1, 14, 46). The World Health Organization (WHO) has supported this program since the discovery of the first new case of Guinea worm in 2019, including active community-based surveillance and vector control with Abate in 2020, and has provided a technical assistant in the district since December 2021. GWEP Cameroon has started proactively tethering dogs in 3 villages in the health area of Nouldaina, the epicenter of the epidemic, in Guéré Health District, at the end of 2021. The program also extended active surveillance in January 2022 from 15 villages in the Nouldaina health area to 26 villages in total, including the neighboring health areas of Gobo (4), Polgue (3), and Bangana (2), all in the Guéré Health District, and finally Dana (2) in neighboring Yagoua Health District.

The Carter Center has supported the program by assigning two technical assistants to the epidemic zone, one in November 2022 and the other in January 2023, for periods of 9 and 6 months respectively. Cameroon is offering a cash reward equivalent to around US\$170 for reporting a case of Guinea worm in a human, and US\$17 for reporting and tethering an infected animal.

ETHIOPIA

Surveillance Ethiopia has not reported a Guinea worm infection in a human in January-August 2023. The peak transmission season in Ethiopia is April-August. As of July 2023, the Ethiopia Dracunculiasis Eradication Program has 198 villages (VASs) and 225 Non-Village Areas (NVAs: temporary farms, fishing, hunting, or gold mining settlements) under active surveillance (Level 1) in Gog and Abobo districts of Gambella Region. A house-to-house case search of villages in Level 2 surveillance areas visited

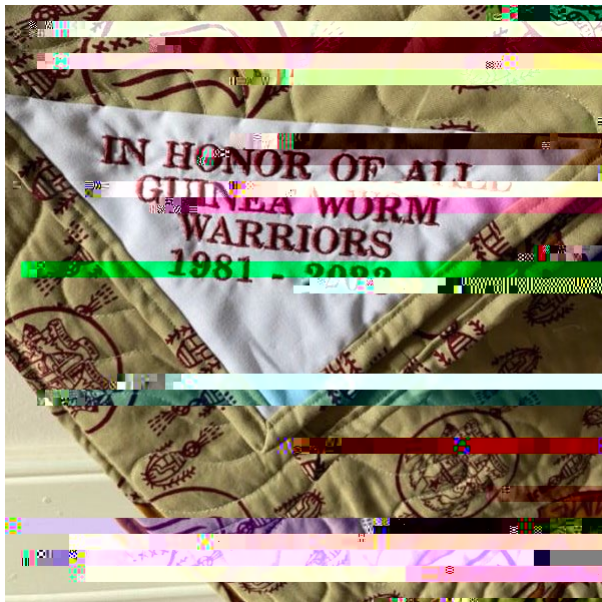
infections in humans or animals in Levels 1, 2 & 3 surveillance areas; over 99% were investigated within 24 hours. It inspected 280 baboons/monkeys/apes (killed or found dead by villagers or trapped by researchers) during the same period, none of which had signs of Guinea worm infection.

Interventions

one safe source of drinking water, and 68% (23/34) of households visited and 73% (8/11) of fish sellers were managing fish guts properly.

The three-year-old Peace-through-Health Initiative held a conference and a joint workshop in Bamakoon August 9-10, 2023. The meeting had over 130 participants from the four target districts of Macina, Tenenkou, Tominian, and Youwarou, and included representatives from the Ministry of Health and other

Figure 2



On September 12, 2023, Dr. Ernesto Ruiz and Emilia Ruiz presented Carter Center CEO Paige Alexander two quilts they were donating to The Carter Center. One quilt comprising pieces of “Guinea worm cloth”, is dedicated “In honor of all Guinea worm warriors 1981 - 2023” and was made by Mrs. Ruiz. Dr. and Mrs. Ruiz commissioned the other quilt, which includes bits from several national Guinea Worm Eradication Programs. The quilts will be displayed at the Center.

