



Scabies in Ecuadorian indigenous communities: adherence to and tolerability of treatment and concordance with health advice.



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Scabies is a neglected tropical disease (NTD) caused by *Sarcoptes scabiei var hominis*. The burden of the disease in many Latin American South countries is unknown.



In March 2023, Amigos de Cayapas Association AAC-CPK studied the prevalence of scabies in the catchment area of Zapallo Grande, in the pacific coast of Ecuador. Cases were offered two doses of treatment, ether with oral ivermectin or topical permethrin. Information was given on how and when to take the second dose and health advice provided on how to prevent reinfection and transmission.



Objective: This study aims to evaluate the communities response to this intervention.



Methods: A systematic house-to-house follow-up visit was performed after completing treatment. A "di novo" questionnaire directed by the interviewer was used. Participation was voluntary and verbal consent was gained. Data was analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics.



Image 1. Community health workers.

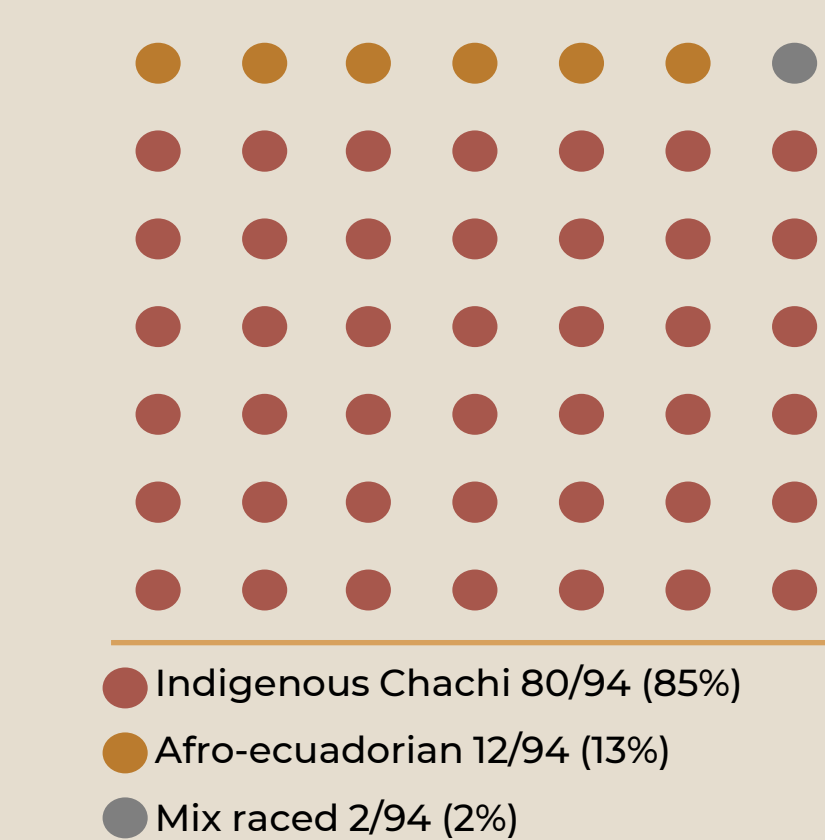


Image 3. Young man from ethnic group afro ecuadorian with scabies.

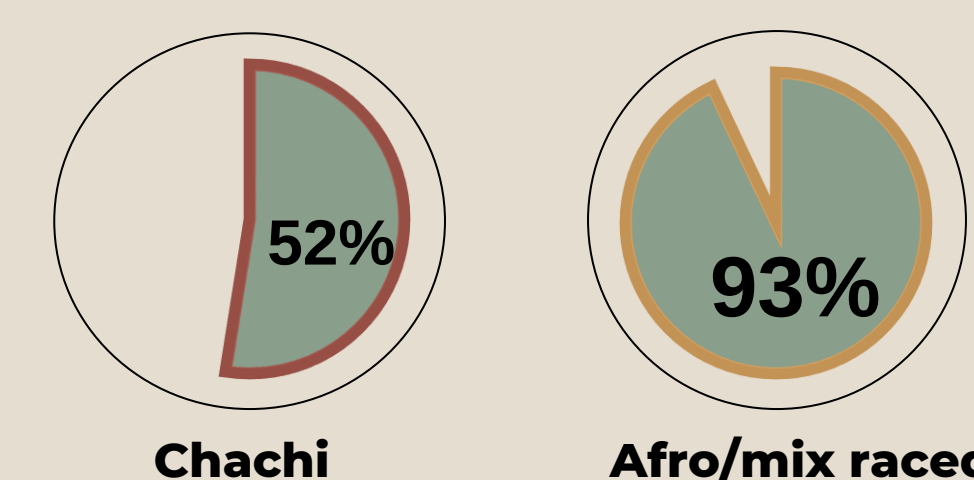


Image 2. kid from indigenous group chachis with scabies.

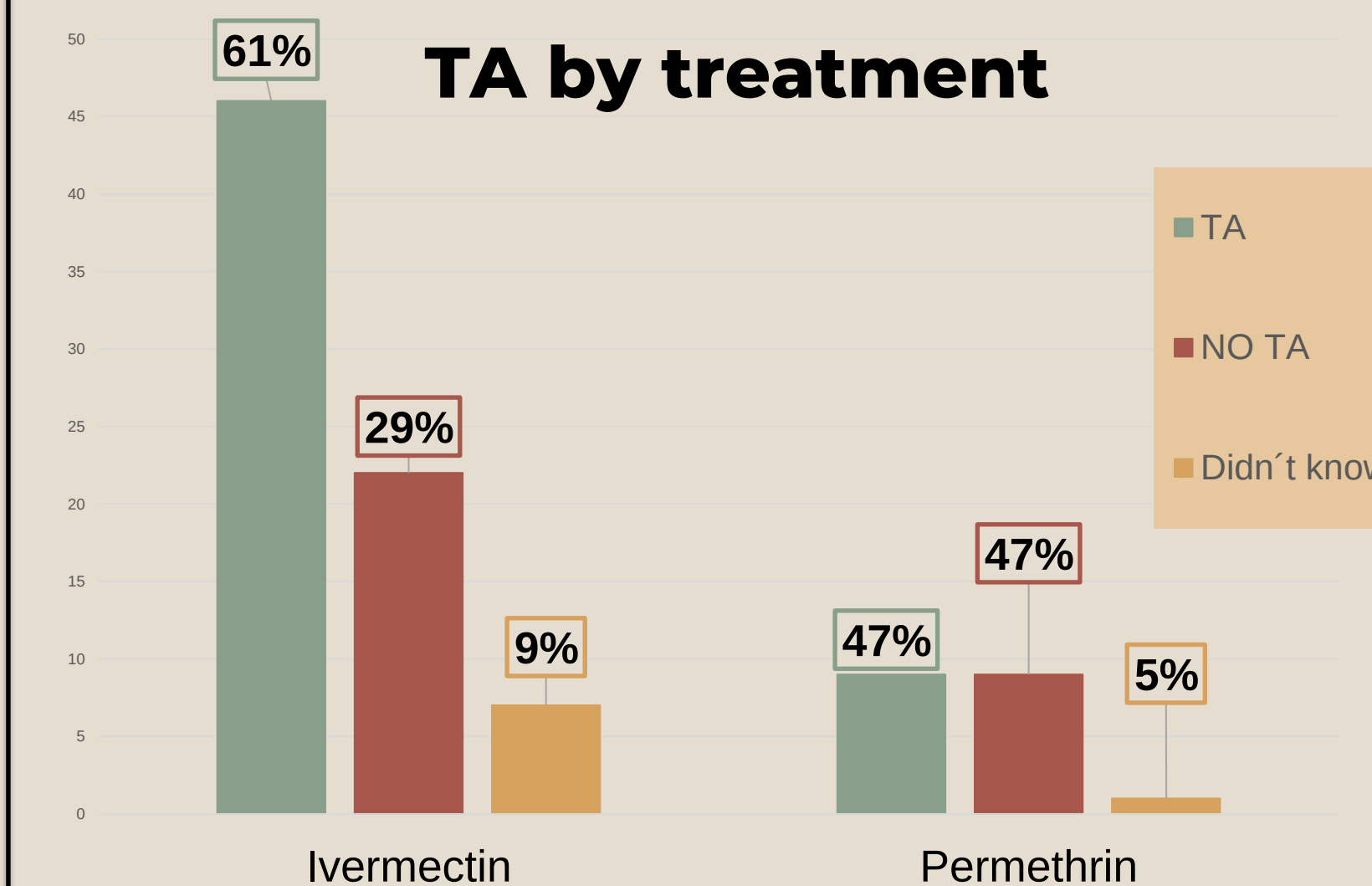
Results: 94/190 (49%) cases were followed up in 18 communities. Total Adherence (TA) to both doses was 59%.



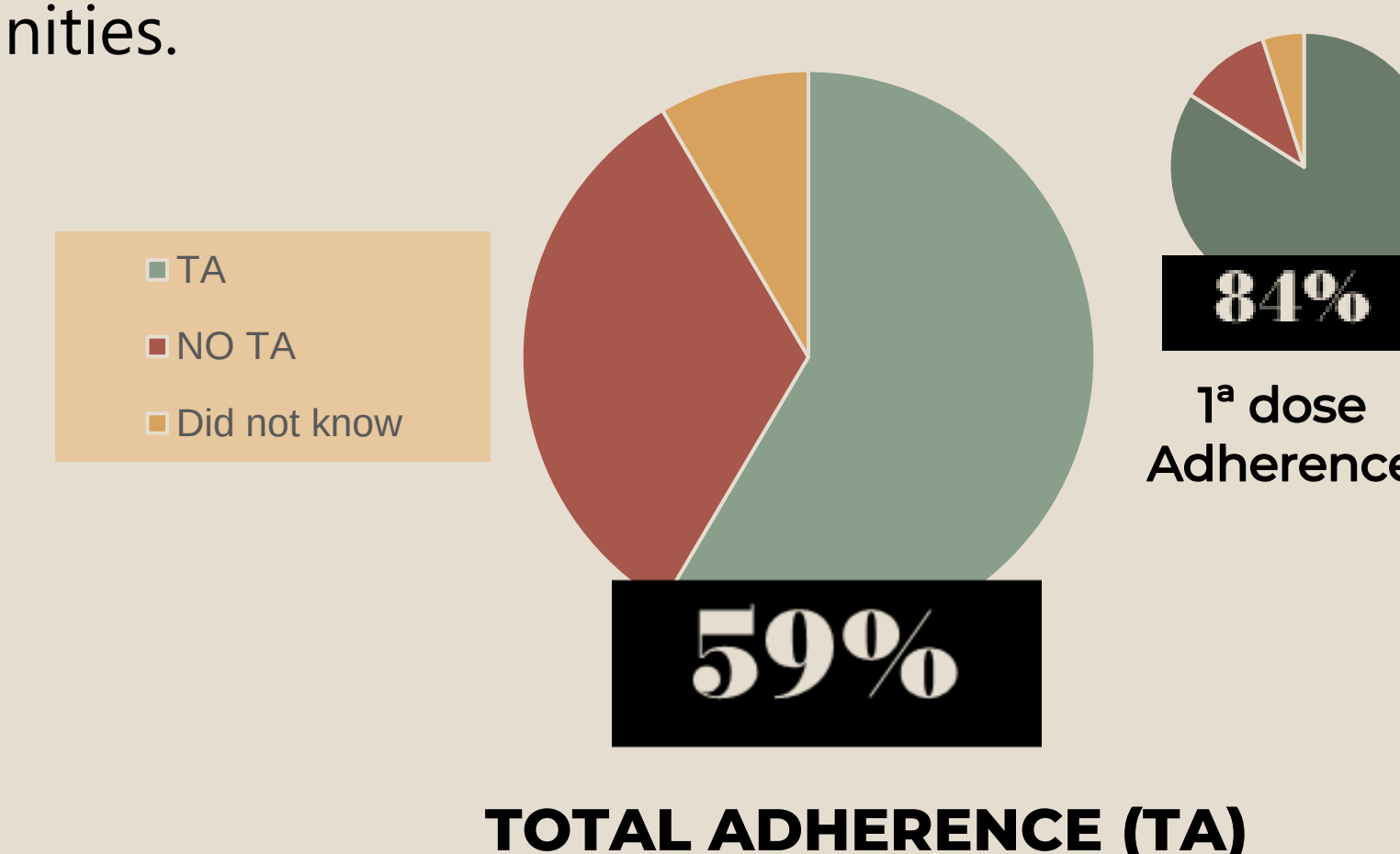
TA by Ethnic group



TA by treatment

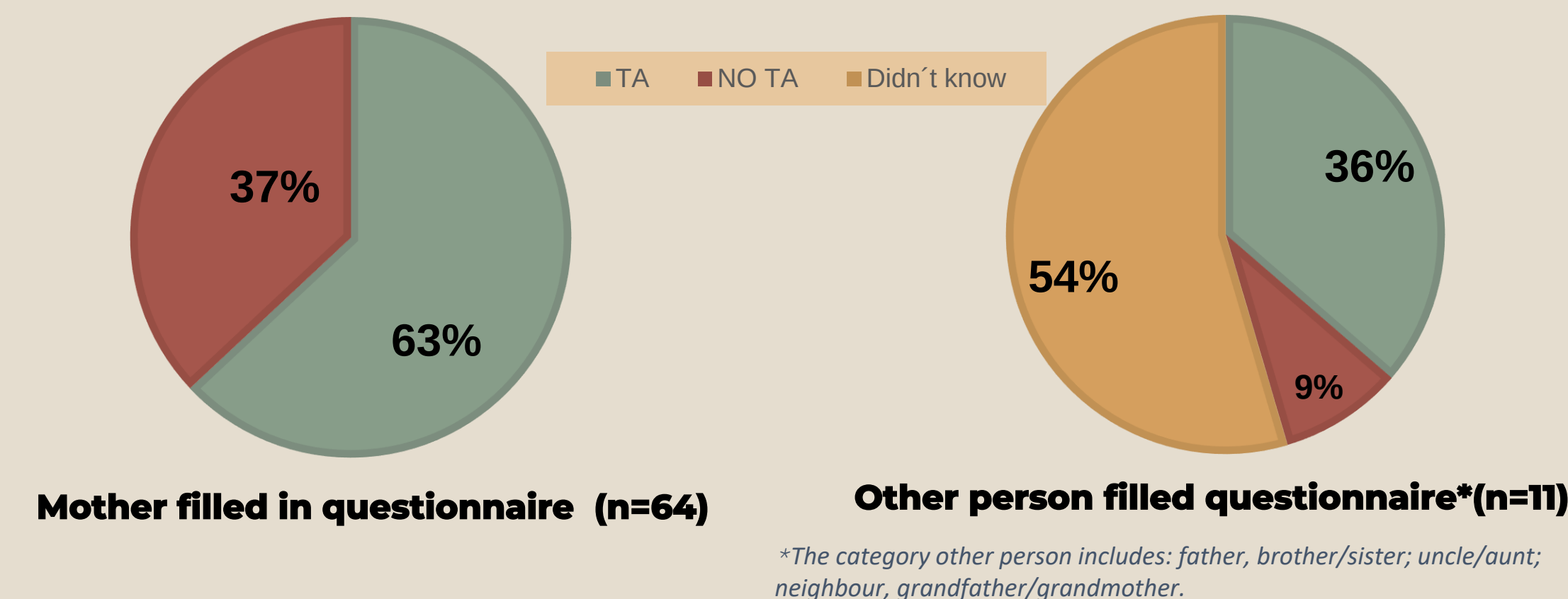


Adherence was influenced by the ethnic group ($p=0,005$). In the case of underaged, the fact that mothers were the person interviewed increased the reported adherence ($p=<.001$).



TOTAL ADHERENCE (TA)

TA by person interviewed



*The category other person includes: father, brother/sister, uncle/aunt, neighbour, grandfather/grandmother.

Adherence was higher for ivermectin than for permethrin. Adherence was similar in women (56%) than in men (44%).

Pruritus remained present in 34% of cases and did not influence adherence ($p=0.540$). Only one case of fever after treatment was reported.

Compliance with health advice was higher with hanging clothes under the sun (48%) than washing clothes with boiled water (38%). The most frequent reason for lack of complying with the advice was "unawareness of the measure".

Conclusions:

- 01 Treatment adherence was low, especially for permethrin. Treatment for scabies was **well tolerated**.
- 02 Sex, age and pruritus did not influence adherence. Considerable differences of adherence were found in each ethnic group.
- 03 Information given was **not understood** or retained.

Recommendations:

- 01 The efficacy of a single dose intervention for the treatment of scabies should be explored in this population.
- 02 Emphasis should be placed on health education, in the local language and aimed at the main caregivers in the case of children and young adults, according to local traditions.
- 03 Community health workers should be empowered to continue reporting scabies cases to local authorities as well as guiding communities on scabies significance.



Asociación amigos del Cayapas
C a y a p a p i c h u l l a k u m a n i