The entire population of Ghana is at risk of malaria. The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2018 was 11,154,394 with 428 deaths.
Malaria
Sustaining Essential Health Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic is putting an incredible strain on health systems across Africa. Health systems are required to maintain routine health services for other illnesses even as they handle the additional burden. In order to prevent widespread morbidity and mortality, it is of vital importance that we work to sustain the delivery of essential life-saving interventions during this difficult time including for Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent health and malaria.

WHO underlines the critical importance of sustaining efforts to prevent, detect and treat malaria during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is of vital importance to ensure the continuity of malaria prevention and treatment services including distribution of insecticide-treated nets and indoor residual spraying, as well as chemoprevention for pregnant women and young children (intermittent preventive treatment in pregnancy and seasonal malaria chemoprevention). Any intervention must consider the importance of both lowering malaria-related mortality and ensuring the safety of communities and health workers given the ease of transmission of COVID-19.

For Ghana, it will be of vital importance to ensure that the planning for the universal coverage campaign for long-lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs) scheduled for 2021 goes ahead, whilst taking into account physical distancing, in accordance with the recent guidance and recommendations from WHO and the RBM partnership to End Malaria. Without this campaign, coupled with the need to also continue to deliver seasonal malaria chemoprevention (SMC), and to sustain essential health services including malaria case management, there will be an increase in malaria cases and deaths. Under the worst-case scenario, in which there is a 75% reduction in access to effective antimalarial medicines, WHO estimate that there could be a 19.5% increase in malaria cases, and a 129.4% increase in malaria deaths in Ghana. This scenario would represent a complete reversal in the substantial progress in malaria mortality reductions seen over the last 2 decades.

Progress
Ghana has secured sufficient resources for the essential anti-malarial commodities required to sustain coverage in 2020 and has distributed sufficient numbers of LLINs and carried out IRS sufficient to achieve 100% operational coverage of the targeted at risk population. The country has carried out insecticide resistance monitoring since 2015 and has reported the results to WHO. Ghana has scaled up coverage of iCCM. Ghana has further increased its already high rating in terms of public sector management systems (CPIA cluster D). The country has significantly enhanced the tracking and accountability mechanisms for malaria with the development of a Malaria Elimination Scorecard. The country is also showing leadership in malaria control through its participation in the High Burden High Impact approach. Ghana has also launched its Zero Malaria Starts with Me campaign.

Impact
The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2018 was 11,154,394 with 428 deaths.

Key Challenges
- Insecticide resistance threatens vector control effectiveness.
- Sustaining the delivery of essential life-saving interventions during the COVID-19 pandemic including for Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Adolescent and Child health including malaria.
Previous Key Recommended Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Action Item</th>
<th>Suggested completion timeframe</th>
<th>Progress</th>
<th>Comments - key activities/accomplishments since last quarterly report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address funding</td>
<td>Ensure the GF malaria funding application is submitted by Q2 2020 and ensure that resources are allocated to malaria control at a level that is sufficient to sustain the gains made in recent years</td>
<td>Q2 2020</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>The country submitted the GF malaria application in Q2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>Ensure that malaria services including case management and vector control are sustained and implemented whilst using COVID-19 sensitive guidelines during the pandemic</td>
<td>Q4 2020</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>The country has adequate stocks of ACTs and RDTs. The IRS campaigns have taken place as scheduled and the SMC campaign is planned for Q3 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RMNCAH and NTDs

Progress
The country has achieved high coverage of tracer RMNCAH interventions, in particular exclusive breastfeeding, DPT3 and postnatal care. Ghana has also recently increased coverage of skilled birth attendants and vitamin A. The country has significantly enhanced the tracking and accountability mechanisms with the development of a Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Scorecard, including with the introduction of community level scorecards.

Progress in addressing Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) in Ghana is measured using a composite index calculated from preventive chemotherapy coverage achieved for lymphatic filariasis, onchocerciasis, schistosomiasis, soil transmitted helminths and trachoma. Preventive chemotherapy coverage in Ghana is high for trachoma (100%). Preventive chemotherapy coverage data for onchocerciasis, lymphatic filariasis schistosomiasis were submitted to WHO but are still being validated. The 2018 index value is not yet calculated.
## Previous Key Recommended Actions

<table>
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<tr>
<td>RMNCAH: Impact</td>
<td>Ensure that essential RMNCAH services are sustained and implemented whilst using Covid-19 sensitive guidelines during the pandemic. Address any stock-outs of essential RMNCAH commodities</td>
<td>Q4 2020</td>
<td>The country reports that the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in low attendance for preventive services including, ANC, PNC, and EPI. The pandemic has led to fears that threaten the relationship between service providers and clients. It has negatively impacted the utilization of health services by community members due to the fear of being infected. COVID-19 has made service provision time consuming and exacerbated the usage of consumables. It has exposed the health system gaps in service delivery, with limited space for isolation and inadequate equipment such as nebulizers, portable scanners, and essential medicines. To mitigate for the COVID pandemic the Government of Ghana has received a USD 100 million loan starting in March 2020.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ghana has responded positively to the RMNCAH recommended action addressing the low coverage of ARTs in the general population and in children, with recent increases reported, and continues to track progress as these actions are implemented.

### Key
- **Action achieved**
- **Some progress**
- **No progress**
- **Deliverable not yet due**

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1 RMNCAH metrics, recommended actions and response tracked through WHO