Malaria is endemic throughout Benin. The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2018 was 2,048,584 with 2,138 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 Benin, it was of vital importance that the universal coverage campaign for long-lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs) went ahead as scheduled in 2020, and the country is congratulated for this achievement. Under the worst-case scenario, in which the LLIN campaign was suspended and with a 75% reduction in access to effective antimalarial medicines, WHO estimated that this would result in a 33.4% increase in malaria cases, and a 98.3% increase in malaria deaths in Benin. This scenario would represent a reversal in the substantial progress in malaria mortality reductions seen over the last 2 decades.

Progress
Benin has distributed sufficient LLINs to achieve universal operational coverage of the targeted at risk population, and has recently completed the LLIN universal coverage campaign. The country has successfully raised resources for most of the financing of the required number of RDTs and LLINs in 2020. Benin has scaled up implementation of iCCM. The country has carried out insecticide resistance monitoring since 2015 and has reported the results to WHO. Benin has significantly enhanced the tracking and accountability mechanisms for malaria with the development of the Malaria Scorecard. Benin has achieved a high rating in terms of public sector management systems (CPIA cluster D).

Impact
The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2018 was 2,048,584 with 2,138 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 Action**

<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>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></td>
<td>The country completed the LLIN campaign during the COVID-19 pandemic through a door to door campaign. High coverage was achieved. Case management has been continued, with the country designing an algorithm for the treatment of malaria during the pandemic. The SMC campaigns are also on track, with three rounds completed by the end of quarter 3 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**New Key Recommended Action**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Action Item</th>
<th>Suggested completion timeframe</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address funding</td>
<td>With the GF funding application being sent back for iteration, work to address the comments of the TRP and resubmit</td>
<td>Q4 2020</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RMNCAH**

**Progress**

Benin has made good progress on tracer RMNCAH interventions, in particular skilled birth attendants, vitamin A and postnatal care coverage, and has recently increased coverage of ARTs in both children and in the total population.

Progress in addressing Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) in Benin is measured by using a composite index calculated from preventive chemotherapy coverage achieved for lymphatic filariasis, onchocerciasis, schistosomiasis, soil transmitted helminths and trachoma. Preventive chemotherapy coverage in Benin is very good for lymphatic filariasis (86%), onchocerciasis (80%) and for schistosomiasis (79%). However, preventive chemotherapy coverage is low for soil transmitted helminths (39%) and for trachoma (38%). Overall, the NTD preventive chemotherapy coverage index for Benin in 2018 is 60 and shows a decrease compared to the 2017 index value (77).

**Previous Key Recommended Actions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RMNCAH¹: Optimise quality of care</td>
<td>Address the falling coverage of vitamin A</td>
<td>Q1 2021</td>
<td></td>
<td>Deliverable not yet due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMNCAH¹: 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></td>
<td>Deliverable not yet due</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ RMNCAH metrics, recommended actions and response tracked through WHO
Key
- Action achieved
- Some progress
- No progress
- Deliverable not yet due