Most of the population of Comoros is at risk of malaria. Transmission is perennial on the Island of Grand Comore and unstable throughout the zones of Anjouan and Mohéli. The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2018 was 19,682 with 8 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. 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 Comoros, it was of vital importance to ensure that the universal coverage campaign for long-lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs) scheduled for 2020 went ahead, whilst taking into account physical distancing, in accordance with the recent guidance and recommendations from WHO and the RBM Partnership to End Malaria. The country is congratulated for successfully completing the LLIN universal coverage campaign in Q3 2020. Without this, coupled with the need to sustain essential health services including malaria case management, there would have been an increase in malaria cases and deaths.

The Global Fund
The Global Fund has announced that Comoros will receive €6.4 million for HIV, tuberculosis, malaria, and health systems strengthening as the country allocation for 2021-2023. The Global Fund has determined the total allocation amount based on Comoros’s disease burden and income level, as well as several other factors. The malaria component is also allocated a specific proportion of the total, according to a formula developed by the Global Fund that takes into account several factors, including disease burden and previous disbursements. For Comoros this is calculated at €4.8 million. The allocations to the individual disease components are not fixed, and can be adjusted according to decisions made at country level. Comoros is urged to ensure that resources are allocated to malaria control from the overall Global Fund country allocation, as well as from domestic resources, to accelerate progress.

Progress
Comoros has secured the required resources for the required LLINs and ACTs in 2020. WHO has identified Comoros as being a country with the potential to eliminate local transmission of malaria by 2020. The country has carried out insecticide resistance monitoring since 2015 and has reported the results to WHO. The country has enhanced the tracking and accountability mechanisms for malaria with the development of a Malaria Elimination Scorecard.
**Impact**
The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2018 was 19,682 with 8 deaths.

**Key Challenges**
- Insufficient human resources and a limited number of partners to implement malaria control activities.
- Gaps in funding to allow larger scale IRS.
- 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 2021 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 2021</td>
<td></td>
<td>Deliverable not yet due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>Investigate and address the reasons for the increase in estimated malaria incidence and deaths between 2015 and 2018</td>
<td>Q4 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comoros reports that a major reason for the increase in cases was the lack of high coverage of vector control. The LLIN universal coverage campaign was completed in Q3 2020</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></td>
<td>Comoros reports that there are sufficient antimalarial commodities in the country. The LLIN campaign was completed in Q3 2020. There are reports of less malaria testing as a result of fewer people going to health facilities during the COVID-19 lock-down, as well as reports of increased ACT use</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The country has responded positively to the recommended actions addressing CPIA cluster D and development of a national insecticide resistance monitoring and management plan and continues to track progress as these actions are implemented.

**RMNCAH and NTDs**

**Progress**
The country has achieved high coverage in the tracer RMNCAH intervention skilled birth attendants and DPT3 coverage.

Progress in addressing Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) in Comoros is measured using a composite index calculated from preventative chemotherapy coverage achieved for lymphatic filariasis and soil transmitted helminths. Preventive chemotherapy coverage in Comoros for both lymphatic filariasis and soil transmitted helminths was not implemented in 2018. Overall, the NTD preventive chemotherapy coverage index for Comoros in 2018 is 0 which represents a decrease compared with the 2017 index value (47).
## Previous Key Recommended Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Action Item</th>
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<th>Progress</th>
<th>Comments - key activities/accomplishments since last quarterly report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RMNCAH¹: Optimise quality of care</td>
<td>a) Address the falling coverage of vitamin A</td>
<td>Q1 2021</td>
<td></td>
<td>Deliverable not yet due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) 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>

Comoros has also responded positively to the RMNCAH recommended actions addressing exclusive breastfeeding, as well as lack of data on ART coverage in children, and continues to track progress as these actions are implemented.

### Key

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action achieved</th>
<th>Some progress</th>
<th>No progress</th>
<th>Deliverable not yet due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

¹ RMNCAH metrics, recommended actions and response tracked through WHO