Malaria transmission occurs all year round in most parts of Uganda. The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2018 was 8,895,436 with 3,302 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 including 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 (intermittent preventive treatment in pregnancy). 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 Uganda, we commend the Ministry of Health, in the decision to go ahead with the universal coverage campaign for LLINs and IRS, in accordance with the recent guidance and recommendations from WHO and the RBM Partnership to End Malaria. This decision, allied with sustained malaria case management through the health system will prevent a significant increase in malaria cases and deaths. Under the worst-case scenario, in which all ITN campaigns are suspended and there is a 75% reduction in access to effective antimalarial medicines, WHO estimate that there could be a 53.1% increase in malaria cases, and a 235.1% increase in malaria deaths in Uganda. This scenario would represent a complete reversal in the substantial progress in malaria mortality reductions seen over the last 2 decades.

Progress
Uganda has procured sufficient LLINs to achieve operational universal coverage of vector control in the targeted at risk population. The country has secured sufficient finances to fund the ACTs, RDTs and LLINs required in 2020. The country has carried out insecticide resistance monitoring since 2015 and has reported the results to WHO. Uganda has completed the insecticide resistance monitoring and management plan. The country has scaled up the implementation of iCCM. Uganda has enhanced the tracking and accountability mechanisms with the development of the Malaria Control Scorecard. Uganda has decreased the estimated malaria incidence and malaria mortality rate by more than 40% since 2010. The country is also showing leadership in malaria control through its participation in the High Burden High Impact approach. Uganda has launched the Mass Action Against Malaria campaign and the End Malaria Fund.

Impact
The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2018 was 8,895,436 with 3,302 deaths.

Key Challenge
- 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>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 worked to ensure that malaria services have continued during the COVID-19 pandemic. IRS was completed and the LLIN campaign is ongoing with a door to door distribution. Sufficient stocks of ACTs are available and case management for malaria has continued, although there have been reduced stocks of RDTs available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>Investigate and address the reasons for the increase in estimated malaria incidence between 2015 and 2018</td>
<td>Q4 2020</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>The increase in reported incidence over the period 2015-2018 is attributed by the county to an increase of 13% in health facility reporting. Additionally, the percentage of malaria cases that were confirmed increased from 39% in 2015 to 92% in 2018. Additionally, the 2018 Uganda Malaria Indicator Survey (UMIS) showed a marked reduction in malaria parasitemia of 9.1%, from 19% reported in 2015 in children under five years of age.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The country has responded positively to the recommended action on removal of tariffs on private sector RDTs to enhance affordability in the private sector.

## RMNCAH and NTDs

### Progress

Uganda has achieved good coverage of the tracer RMNCAH intervention of exclusive breastfeeding. Uganda has significantly enhanced the tracking and accountability mechanisms with the ongoing development of a Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health Scorecard.

Progress in addressing Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) in Uganda 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 Uganda is very good for onchocerciasis (96%) and for lymphatic filariasis (80%). Preventive chemotherapy coverage is below WHO target for soil transmitted helminths (67%), schistosomiasis (62%) and for trachoma (52%). Overall, the NTD preventive chemotherapy coverage index for Uganda in 2018 is 70, which represents an increase compared with the 2017 index value (68).
### Previous Key Recommended Actions

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<tbody>
<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>The MOH has Intensified community messaging to increase demand for RMNCAH and other health services and continues to prioritize PPE for health workers. The MOH COVID-19 response includes close monitoring of risk and infections in health workers in order to respond promptly to maintain service delivery. As a result health facility visits including for RMNCAH services have increased over Q2 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The country has responded positively to the recommended action on the low coverage of vitamin A and continues to track progress as this action is 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