The entire population of Equatorial Guinea is at high risk of malaria and the transmission is intense all year round. The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2019 was 83,396 and 15 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, Adolescent and Child health, Neglected Tropical Diseases and malaria.

For Equatorial Guinea, the country is encouraged to sustain the delivery of essential health services including malaria case management, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Without this, it is estimated by WHO that 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 3.8% increase in malaria cases, and a 30.8% increase in malaria deaths in Equatorial Guinea. This scenario would represent a complete reversal in the substantial progress in malaria mortality reductions seen over the last 2 decades.

It is essential to ensure the continuity of malaria, RMNCAH and NTD services in 2021 as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact our continent. This may include the implementation of any necessary catch-up activities and ensuring timely planning to account for potential delays in procurement and delivery. Any intervention must ensure the safety of communities and health workers given the ease of transmission of COVID-19.

Progress
Equatorial Guinea has made progress with malaria control on Bioko Island and is working to extend this success to the mainland. The country has completed the national insecticide resistance monitoring and management plan and has reported the results of insecticide resistance monitoring to WHO.

Impact
The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2019 was 83,396 and 15 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, malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases.

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</td>
<td>Ensure that sufficient domestic resources are committed to malaria control</td>
<td>Q4 2014</td>
<td></td>
<td>The country is working to mobilise resources to address funding gaps</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>The country reports that there are sufficient supplies of ACTs and RDTs to sustain case management during the COVID-19 pandemic, although there were some delays in distributing ACTs. Reductions in the number of patients in Malabo hospital were reported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Equatorial Guinea has responded positively to the previous recommended actions addressing low coverage of iCCM and continues to track progress as this action is implemented.

**RMNCAH and NTDs**

**Progress**

Progress in addressing Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) in Equatorial Guinea is measured using a composite index calculated from preventive chemotherapy coverage achieved for lymphatic filariasis, onchocerciasis, schistosomiasis and soil transmitted helminths. Preventive chemotherapy coverage in Equatorial Guinea is low for Soil Transmitted Helminthiasis (33%) and 0% for the rest of the targeted NTDs (Lymphatic filariasis, Onchocerciasis and schistosomiasis). Overall, the NTD preventive chemotherapy coverage index for Equatorial Guinea in 2019 is zero, which represents no change compared with the 2018 index value (0).

**Previous Key Recommended Actions**

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<tr>
<td>RMNCAH¹: Optimise quality of care</td>
<td>a) Investigate and address the reasons for the decreasing coverage of postnatal care</td>
<td>Q4 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>The country does not yet systematically collect postnatal care data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMNCAH¹: Impact</td>
<td>b) Investigate and address the reasons for the lack of reported data on vitamin A coverage</td>
<td>Q2 2019</td>
<td></td>
<td>The country reported data in 2018 and has increased vitamin A coverage by 2% to 7% but coverage remains low</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>The country reports there have been no interruptions in delivery of health services. Equatorial Guinea have adapted this year's workplans to the context of COVID 19, having developed a manual for providing safe care for pregnancy, childbirth and how to keep health workers safe. The country reports it is maintaining services for family planning, ANC, and vaccines, among others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTDs</td>
<td>Implement preventive chemotherapy for Lymphatic Filariasis, onchocerciasis, schistosomiasis and work to increase the Preventive chemotherapy coverage for soil transmitted helminths</td>
<td>Q4 2021</td>
<td></td>
<td>Deliverable not yet due</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ RMNCAH metrics, recommended actions and response tracked through WHO
Equatorial Guinea has responded positively to the RMNCAH recommended actions addressing lack of data on vitamin A and low coverage of exclusive breastfeeding, ARTs and DPT3. The country continues to track progress as these actions are implemented, and the country has recently increased ART coverage in children.

**Key**
- Green: Action achieved
- Yellow: Some progress
- Red: No progress
- Gray: Deliverable not yet due