Malaria transmission is more intense in the south of Mali. The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2019 was 6,453,445 with 1,454 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, neglected Tropical Diseases and malaria.

For Mali, we commend the Ministry of Health, in the decision to go ahead with the universal coverage campaign for LLINs, and rolling out SMC, in accordance with the recent guidance and recommendations from WHO and the RBM Partnership to End Malaria. Based on WHO modeling, this decision, allied with sustained malaria case management through the health system and the delivery of seasonal malaria chemoprevention, 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 14.9% increase in malaria cases, and a 40.1% increase in malaria deaths in Mali. 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
Mali has carried out insecticide resistance monitoring since 2015 and has reported the results to WHO. Mali has procured sufficient LLINs to achieve universal 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. The country is also showing leadership in malaria control through its participation in the High Burden High Impact Approach.

In line with the legacy agenda of the ALMA chair, His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta, Mali has significantly enhanced the tracking and accountability mechanisms for malaria with the development of the Malaria Control Scorecard, although this scorecard is not yet posted to the ALMA Scorecard Knowledge Hub.

Impact
The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2019 was 6,453,445 with 1,454 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 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>The country submitted the GF malaria funding request</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</td>
<td>Q4 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mali have updated the LLIN, IRS and SMC guidelines taking into account the COVID-19 pandemic. The LLIN campaign has been completed and planning is ongoing for the SMC campaigns. All campaigns are adapted to take account of COVID-19 including with switching to door to door distributions and ensuring PPE were available. Malaria RDTs have been supplied to the COVID-19 support centres. The country has sufficient stocks of ACTs and RDTs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### RMNCAH and NTDs

**Progress**
Mali has achieved high coverage of the tracer RMNCAH intervention of vitamin A and has recently increased coverage of exclusive breastfeeding and skilled birth attendants. The country has significantly enhanced the tracking and accountability mechanisms with the development of a Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health Scorecard.

Progress in addressing Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) in Mali 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 Mali is high for trachoma (100%), for schistosomiasis (95%), for onchocerciasis (79%). Mass Drug Administration was not carried out in Mali in 2019, based on transmission assessments.
<table>
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<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>Mali has established a COVID-19 crisis committee and has trained health care workers on the management of cases and on surveillance. Testing kits have been supplied to laboratories and health facilities have been provided with hand washing facilities and PPE. Essential RMNCAH services have been maintained during COVID-19 and in accordance with the Government Action Plan, the Directorate of Pharmacy and Medicines (DPM) has ensured the availability of essential RMNCAH commodities. However, there remains lower use of health services by communities due to the lack of a communication/awareness strategy. Mali has started the vaccination campaign against COVID-19 focusing first on BAMAKO. It will be necessary to enhance communication and advocacy to enhance community support for the success of the vaccination campaign.</td>
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<tr>
<td>NTDs</td>
<td>Ensure that NTD interventions including MDAs, vector control and Morbidity Management and Disability Prevention are sustained and implemented whilst using Covid-19 sensitive guidelines during the pandemic. This includes prioritising key necessary catch up activities</td>
<td>Q4 2021</td>
<td>In Mali, NTD key interventions continued during the COVID-19 pandemic by respecting preventive measures. Training of drug distributors and of the technical directors of Health centres was conducted. Social mobilization using social mass media, television, community radio, traditional communicators, etc was conducted. Mass Drug Administration for onchocerciasis and schistosomiasis was organized in 2020; A transmission assessment for Lymphatic Filariasis was conducted in Kidal, Mopti, Gao, Menaka, Koulikoro and Kayes. Morbidity Management and Disability Prevention were also conducted where hydrocele surgeries and elephantiasis case management were conducted in the health districts of Koutiala, Bougouni and Yanfolila. NTD interventions are sustained and implemented whilst using Covid-19 sensitive guidelines during the pandemic.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The country has responded positively to the RMNCAH recommended action addressing the low coverage of ARTs, with small increases in coverage reported.

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