In Burundi, about 24% of the population is at high risk for malaria and nearly 22% live in malaria-free highland areas. The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2020 was 4,732,339 with 2,276 deaths.
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.

WHO underlines the critical importance of sustaining efforts to prevent, detect and treat malaria during the COVID-19 pandemic. For Burundi, it was important to ensure that the indoor residual spraying (IRS) campaign was completed as planned, whilst sustaining case management, and that the 2022 LLIN campaign takes place on schedule. Under the worst-case scenario, WHO estimated that there could have been a 23.2% increase in malaria cases, and a 99.8% increase in malaria deaths in Burundi. This scenario would have represented a complete reversal in the substantial progress in malaria mortality reductions seen over the last 2 decades.

WHO estimates that there were an additional 47,000 malaria deaths globally in 2020 due to service disruptions during the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to an estimated 7.5% increase in deaths.

It is essential to ensure the continuity of malaria, RMNCAH and NTD services in 2022 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.

The country has been affected by the continent-wide restriction of access to COVID-19 vaccines and had only been able to cover 0.03% of their population by the end of 2021.

Malaria

Progress

Burundi procured sufficient LLINs to achieve universal coverage of the targeted at-risk population. The country secured sufficient resources to procure the RDTs and ACTs required in 2021. The country has carried out insecticide resistance monitoring since 2015 and has reported the results to WHO and has developed an insecticide resistance monitoring and management plan.

In line with the legacy agenda of the ALMA chair, His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta, Burundi has significantly enhanced the tracking and accountability mechanisms for malaria with the development of a Malaria Control Scorecard. This scorecard tool has recently been updated and is being decentralized but has not yet been shared on the ALMA Scorecard Hub. The country RMNCAH scorecard has been shared through the Scorecard Hub.

Impact

The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2020 was 4,732,339 with 2,276 deaths.

Key Challenges

- The country has experienced a malaria upsurge from 2015.
- Gaps to further scale up IRS.
- 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>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 2022</td>
<td></td>
<td>Malaria control and elimination activities are being conducted in Burundi whilst respecting COVID-19 preventive measures. In Q4 2021, the country conducted IRS in five health districts and the country is planning for the 2022 LLIN campaign. The country is also conducting a survey on IPTp while other routine activities are being conducted as planned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### RMNCAH and NTDs

**Progress**

Burundi has achieved high coverage of tracer RMNCAH interventions, including exclusive breastfeeding, DPT3, ART coverage and skilled birth attendance. Burundi 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 Burundi is measured using a composite index calculated from preventive chemotherapy coverage achieved for onchocerciasis, schistosomiasis, soil transmitted helminths and trachoma. In 2020, preventive chemotherapy coverage in Burundi is high for trachoma (100%), schistosomiasis (100%), soil-transmitted helminths (98%) and for onchocerciasis (82%). Overall, the NTD preventive chemotherapy coverage index for Burundi in 2020 is 95 and this represents an increase over the 2019 index value (93).
<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 2022</td>
<td>Burundi reports that RMNCAH essential services are being conducted as planned during the COVID-19 pandemic. In Q4 2021, the country conducted meetings, training and workshops for health workers. For example, this included the development of the acceleration plan of the national Surveillance of Maternal, Perinatal and Response (SDMPR), training for providers, enhanced supervision, and training of community health workers in the community-based distribution of contraceptives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTDs</td>
<td>Ensure that NTD interventions including Mass Drug Administration, 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>Burundi is conducting NTD control and elimination activities whilst respecting COVID-19 measures. Between June and December 2021, the following key interventions were carried out: MDA with Albendazole where children from 1 to 14 years were targeted countrywide, a remapping to update national prevalence for Schistosomiasis and Soil Transmitted Helminths where 763 schools were part of the survey with a total number of 25,942 children tested. A trachoma surveillance survey was conducted in Gashoho district in order to prepare the trachoma elimination dossier. The trachoma elimination dossier is being elaborated. The country initiated the development of the NTD Master Plan 2021-2026 for the control of Blindness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Burundi has responded positively to the RMNCAH recommended actions addressing low coverage of ART coverage in children, with a 2% increase in coverage reported in the last year.

**Key**

- Action achieved
- Some progress
- No progress
- Deliverable not yet due

¹ RMNCAH metrics, recommended actions and response tracked through WHO