Malaria transmission is more intense in the south of Mali. The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2020 was 3,379,651 with 1,698 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.

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.

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.

Given the difficulties in securing essential health commodities in Africa during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is of vital importance that countries sign, ratify and deposit the African Medicines Agency (AMA) instrument with the AUC in order to improve access to quality, safe and efficacious medical products in Africa. The country is congratulated for doing this.

The country has been affected by the continent-wide restriction of access to COVID-19 vaccines and had only been able to cover 5% of their population by April 2022. The country, working with partners, should invest in education and behaviour change communication to increase the uptake of COVID vaccines and therapeutics.

Malaria

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 and has carried out drug resistance testing since 2018 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. The country has also recently launched the Zero Malaria Starts with Me campaign.
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 Hub.

**Impact**
The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2020 was 3,379,651 with 1,698 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 Action**

<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</td>
<td>Q4 2022</td>
<td>Mali continues the implementation of key malaria control interventions during the COVID-19 pandemic and in the current security context. This include the ITN distribution to pregnant women and infants through routine services. The results of the 2021 SMC campaign in 65 districts out of 75 were published with a good coverage. ACTs and RDTs are available at central and decentralized levels following recent procurements. Training of health professionals in case management is ongoing following the 2020 revised guidelines. IRS is implemented in 3 districts and planning is on-going for the start in May 2022. Planning is also on-going for the 2022 SMC campaign and the macroplanning is already completed and microplanning is ongoing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RMNCAH and NTDs**

**Progress**
The country has significantly enhanced the tracking and accountability mechanisms with the development of a Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health Scorecard and has published it on the ALMA Scorecard Hub.

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 and trachoma. In 2020, preventive chemotherapy coverage was 100% for lymphatic filariasis and trachoma, 97% for schistosomiasis and 79% for onchocerciasis. Overall, the NTD preventive chemotherapy coverage index for Mali in 2020 is 95, which represents a high increase compared with the 2019 index value of 17.
### Previous Key Recommended Actions

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</thead>
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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>[Green]</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. Since September 2021, all indicators have returned to their expected levels, taking into account pre-pandemic trends. The country is intensifying COVID-19 vaccination efforts.</td>
</tr>
<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 2022</td>
<td>[Green]</td>
<td>The country is conducting NTD control and preventive measures by respecting COVID-19 measures. In Q1 2022, in addition to NTD routine activities, the country is in the preparation of MDA for Schistosomiasis and Onchocerciasis. Transmission Assessment 3 (TAS3) and Morbidity Management and Disability Prevention for Lymphatic Filariasis are under preparation too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimise quality of care</td>
<td>Address the falling coverage of vitamin A</td>
<td>Q4 2022</td>
<td>[Gray]</td>
<td>Deliverable not yet due</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.

### Key

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

¹ RMNCAH metrics, recommended actions and response tracked through WHO