The entire population of Sierra Leone is at high risk of malaria. The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2020 was 1,223,397 with 1,648 deaths.
Sustaining Essential Health Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted routine health services considerably, and the economic impacts continue to hamper health systems recovery. It is vitally important that we focus on recovering lost ground in delivering essential life-saving interventions during this difficult time, sustaining progress towards the SDG targets for Malaria, Neglected Tropical Diseases and Reproductive, Maternal, New-born, Child and Adolescent health.

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. Early procurement of essential health commodities is also highly recommended whilst long delivery times persist.

The country has been affected by the continent-wide restriction of access to COVID-19 vaccines and had only been able to cover 22% of their population by July 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
Sierra Leone secured sufficient resources to achieve universal coverage of LLINs, RDTs and ACTs in 2022, has good levels of commodity stocks and has distributed sufficient LLINs to achieve 100% 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 finalised the insecticide resistance monitoring and management plan. Sierra Leone has launched the Zero Malaria Starts with Me campaign.

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

Impact
The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2020 was 1,223,397 with 1,648 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 guidelines during the pandemic</td>
<td>Q4 2022</td>
<td></td>
<td>The country launched the 2021 MIS report and malaria prevalence in U5 decreased from 40% in 2016 to 22% in 2021. The country distributed malaria commodities up to the last mile. Training on supply chain tools, data extraction and analysis for newly posted pharmacists to the districts. The stratification process for the 2023 ITN mass distribution campaign was completed. 2023 ITN mass distribution campaign macroplanning and microplanning process have started. IRS implementation took place in May 2022 with resulting high coverage of 96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>Ensure that drug resistance monitoring is conducted and data reported to WHO</td>
<td>Q1 2023</td>
<td></td>
<td>The country has conducted drug resistance testing in 5 sentinel sites (Makeni GH, Kalangba HC, Bo GH, Jembe HC and Kenema GH) from Dec 2021 to 15th June 2022. 325 and 192 cases were enrolled for the AL and ASAQ respectively</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RMNCAH and NTDs

Progress
Sierra Leone has achieved high coverage of the tracer RMNCAH intervention of DPT3. The country enhanced the tracking and accountability mechanisms with the development of the Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Scorecard.

Progress in addressing Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) in Sierra Leone is measured using a composite index calculated from preventive chemotherapy coverage achieved for lymphatic filariasis, onchocerciasis, schistosomiasis, and soil transmitted helminths. In 2020, preventive chemotherapy coverage was 75% for onchocerciasis, 70% for lymphatic filariasis, 52% for schistosomiasis, and 44% for soil transmitted helminths. Overall, the NTD preventive chemotherapy coverage index for Sierra Leone in 2020 was 59, which represents a decrease compared with the 2019 index value (73).
## Previous Key Recommended Actions

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>RMNCAH<strong>1</strong>: 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>Rollout training of over 5,000 national CHWs in 8 districts was carried out with preparation to train the 3,700 CHW from the remaining 8 districts underway. The RMNCAHN interventions’ package for CHWs includes iCCM, Home visits to counsel parents and young people on family planning, adolescent health, ANC, early PNC, ITN use, infant and young child feeding, immunization (counselling and tracing of zero dose and defaulters), sanitation and hygiene, IPC; Community based surveillance. Community mobilization during subnational and national Health, Nutrition and WASH campaigns. The MoHS with the support from partners developed an integrated MNH package and trained 14 national master trainers/mentors who are going to train health workers in primary health care facilities and hospitals to avoid a fragmented efforts to maternal and new-born health. The 2nd round of the national distribution of free health care and integrated malaria, TB and HIV drugs and supplies was completed during this reporting period. A national periodic intensification of vitamin A supplementation (outreach and routine) has been completed. The MoHS has conducted the National Health Summit and Recognition Award in April under a theme Transforming Health Care Delivery Towards Universal Health Coverage. The outcome of the Summit which was opened by the President of Sierra Leone, was agreed national priorities to be implemented in the year. The priorities were disseminated through the Ministry’s communique to all stakeholders</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Optimise quality of care</td>
<td>Address the falling coverage of vitamin A</td>
<td>Q4 2022</td>
<td>A national integrated IPV, Vitamin A and Albendazole campaign has been conducted in all districts, with 81% coverage for IPV, 75.3% for Vitamin A, and 80% for Albendazole for under five children. Routine vitamin A supplementation is being consolidated including by training and planning involving district medical officers, M&amp;E officers and nutrition officers of all the 16 districts</td>
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**1** RMNCAH metrics, recommended actions and response tracked through WHO
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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NTDs</td>
<td>Recognising the negative impact of COVID-19 on the 2020 MDA coverage, 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 prioritizing key necessary catch up activities</td>
<td>Q4 2022</td>
<td></td>
<td>Deliverable not yet due</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sierra Leone has responded positively to the RMNCAH recommended action addressing low coverage of ARTs in children and continues to track progress as this action is implemented, with increases in coverage recently observed.

**Key**

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