Comoros ALMA Quarterly Report Quarter One, 2021



Scorecard for Accountability and Action



Metrics Commodities Financed and Financial Control LLIN financing 2021 projection (% of need) Public sector RDT financing 2021 projection (% of need) Public sector ACT financing 2021 projection (% of need) World Bank rating on public sector management and institutions 2019 (CPIA Cluster D) Insecticide Resistance Monitoring, Implementation and Impact Insecticide classes with mosquito resistance in representative sentinel sites confirmed since 2010 Insecticide resistance monitored since 2015 and National Insecticide Resistance Monitoring and Management Plan RDTs in stock (>9 months stock) ACTs in stock (>9 months stock) LLIN/IRS campaign on track Country Reporting Launch of Zero Malaria Starts with Me Campaign Scale of Implementation of iCCM Operational LLIN/IRS coverage (% of at risk 100 On track to reduce case incidence by ≥40% by 2020 (vs 2015) On track to reduce case mortality by ≥40% by 2020 (vs 2015) Tracer Indicators for Maternal and Child Health and NTDs Mass Treatment Coverage for Neglected Tropical 68 Disease (NTD index, %)(2019) Estimated % of Total Population living with HIV who 60 have access to antiretroviral therapy (2019) Estimated % of children (0-14 years old) living with HIV who have access to antiretroviral therapy (2019) % deliveries assisted by skilled birth attendant 82 Postnatal care (within 48 hrs) 49 11 Exclusive breastfeeding (% children < 6 months) Vitamin A Coverage 2018 (2 doses) DPT3 coverage 2019 (vaccination among 0-11 month olds)

Most of the population of Comoros is at risk of malaria. Transmission is perennial on the Island of Grand Comore and unstable throughout the zones of Anjouan and Mohéli. The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2019 was 17,697.

Key



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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 Comoros, it was of vital importance to ensure that the universal coverage campaign for long-lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs) scheduled for 2020 went ahead, whilst taking into account physical distancing, in accordance with the recent guidance and recommendations from WHO and the RBM Partnership to End Malaria. The country is congratulated for successfully completing the LLIN universal coverage campaign in Q3 2020. Without this, coupled with the need to sustain essential health services including malaria case management, there would have been an increase in malaria cases and deaths.

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

WHO has identified Comoros as being a country with the potential to eliminate local transmission of malaria. Comoros has adequate stocks of malaria commodities for 2021. The country has carried out insecticide resistance monitoring since 2015 and has reported the results to WHO. WHO has identified Comoros as being a country with the potential to eliminate local transmission of malaria by 2025.

In line with the legacy agenda of the ALMA chair, His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta, the country has enhanced the tracking and accountability mechanisms for malaria with the development of a Malaria Elimination Scorecard, however this scorecard is not yet publicly shared on the ALMA Scorecard Knowledge Hub.

Impact

The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2019 was 17,697.

Key Challenges

- Insufficient human resources and a limited number of partners to implement malaria control activities.
- Gaps in funding to allow larger scale 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

Objective	Action Item	Suggested completion timeframe	Progress	Comments - key activities/accomplishments since last quarterly report
Address funding	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	Q2 2021		Deliverable not yet due but the country has commenced work on the GF application
Impact	Ensure that malaria services including case management and vector control are sustained and implemented whilst using COVID-19 sensitive guidelines during the pandemic	Q4 2020		Comoros reports that there are sufficient antimalarial commodities in the country. The LLIN campaign was completed in Q3 2020. There were reports of less malaria testing as a result of fewer people going to health facilities during the COVID-19 lock-down, as well as reports of increased ACT use however community health workers are stationed at community level and provided malaria diagnosis. Active case detection was put on hold. Funds have been made available to ensure that malaria interventions can continue safely
Impact	Investigate and address the reasons for the increase in estimated malaria incidence between 2015 and 2019, which means that the country is not on track to achieve the 2020 target of a 40% reduction in malaria incidence	Q4 2021		Comoros reports that a major reason for the increase in cases was the lack of high coverage of vector control. The LLIN universal coverage campaign was completed in 2020 alongside targeted IRS. This has led to a significant reduction in malaria transmission from 19,682 malaria cases in 2018 to 4,546 in 2020

The country has responded positively to the recommended actions addressing CPIA cluster D and development of a national insecticide resistance monitoring and management plan and continues to track progress as these actions are implemented.

RMNCAH and NTDs

Progress

The country has achieved high coverage in the tracer RMNCAH intervention skilled birth attendants and DPT3 coverage.

Progress in addressing Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) in Comoros is measured using a composite index calculated from preventive chemotherapy coverage achieved for lymphatic filariasis and soil transmitted helminths. Preventive chemotherapy coverage in Comoros is good for both soil transmitted helminths (73%) and lymphatic filariasis (64%). Overall, the NTD preventive chemotherapy coverage index for Comoros

in 2019 is 68, which represents a substantial increase compared with the 2018 index value (0).

Previous Kev Recommended Actions

Objective	Action Item	Suggested completion timeframe	Progress	Comments - key activities/accomplishments since last quarterly report
RMNCAH ¹ : Optimise quality of care	a) Address the falling coverage of vitamin A	Q1 2021		No progress reported
	b) 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	Q4 2020		Overall, COVID-19 has led to a reduction in patients seeking care at health facilities. The Government has set up a national commission to coordinate and manage the pandemic. In this high-level commission, there are committees responsible for each Island. A COVID-19 response plan is established to serve as a common thread of interventions for COVID-19 prevention and management in the Comoros Union.
NTDs	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	Q4 2021		By respecting COVID-19 preventive measures, Comoros resumed NTD key interventions and organized MDA in November and December 2020. The country is now conducting the post MDA coverage survey

Comoros has also responded positively to the RMNCAH recommended actions addressing exclusive breastfeeding, as well as lack of data on ART coverage in children, and continues to track progress as these actions are implemented.



¹ RMNCAH metrics, recommended actions and response tracked through WHO