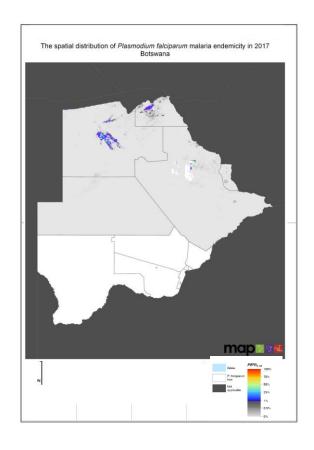
# **Botswana ALMA Quarterly Report Quarter Four, 2021**



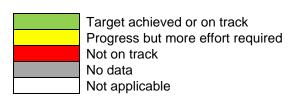
## **Scorecard for Accountability and Action**



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The annual reported number of confirmed malaria cases in 2020 was 953 with 11 deaths.

# Key



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# 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 of COVID-19. 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. It is essential to ensure the continuity of malaria prevention and treatment services including distribution of insecticide-treated nets and indoor residual spraying. The country has successfully implemented the 2021 IRS campaign.

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 but has been able to cover 43% of their population by the end of 2021.

## Malaria

#### **Progress**

Botswana successfully mobilised sufficient financing for IRS, malaria diagnosis and treatment in 2021. The country has finalised the insecticide resistance management and monitoring plan. Botswana has adequate stocks of ACTs and RDTs and planning for the IRS campaign in Q4 2021 is underway. WHO has identified Botswana 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, Botswana has enhanced the tracking and accountability mechanisms for malaria with the development of the Malaria Elimination Scorecard and this is shared publicly in-country, but not yet posted to the ALMA Scorecard Knowledge Hub. Discussions are ongoing for the creation of a malaria and NTD council.

#### **Impact**

The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2020 was 953 with 11 deaths.

#### Key Challenges

- Achieving and maintaining IRS coverage above 80%.
- Need to further strengthen cross border collaboration with neighbouring countries.
- Sustaining the delivery of essential life-saving interventions during the COVID-19 pandemic including for Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Adolescent and Child health, malaria and NTDs.

**Previous Key Recommended Actions** 

Objective	Action Item	Suggested completion timeframe	Progress	Comments - key activities/accomplishments since last quarterly report
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 2022		The country has sufficient antimalarial commodities (ACTs and RDTs). The 2021 IRS was rolled out in October and is expected to be completed in January, with high coverage reported to date. The attention on COVD-19 continues to divert both staff and resources from malaria

Botswana has responded positively to the recommended action addressing the lack of data on iCCM and continues to strengthen access to treatment of malaria, pneumonia and diarrhea.

**New Key Recommended Action** 

Objective	Action Item	Suggested completion timeframe
Impact	Investigate and address the reasons for the increase in estimated malaria incidence and mortality between 2015 and 2020, which means that the country did not achieve the 2020 target of a 40% reduction in malaria incidence	Q4 2022

### **RMNCAH and NTDs**

#### **Progress**

Botswana has achieved good coverage in tracer RMNCAH interventions, including deliveries by skilled birth attendants, DPT3, vitamin A and ART coverage in the total population. The country has enhanced the tracking and accountability mechanisms with the development of a Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Adolescent and Child Health Scorecard.

Progress in addressing Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) in Botswana is illustrated using a composite index calculated from preventive chemotherapy coverage achieved for schistosomiasis, soil transmitted helminths and trachoma. Preventive chemotherapy coverage is good for soil-transmitted helminthiasis (63%) but preventive chemotherapy was not implemented for schistosomiasis (0%) and for trachoma (0%). The overall NTD preventive chemotherapy coverage index in 2020 is 3 and slightly increased compared to the 2019 index value (0).

**Previous Key Recommended Actions** 

Objective	Action Item	Suggested completion timeframe	Progress	Comments - key activities/accomplishments since last quarterly report
RMNCAH <sup>1</sup> : Impact	Ensure that essential RMNCAH services are sustained and implemented whilst using COVID-19 sensitive guidelines during the pandemic. Address any stockouts of essential RMNCAH commodities	Q4 2022		No progress reported

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> RMNCAH metrics, recommended actions and response tracked through WHO

The country has responded positively to the RMNCAH recommended actions addressing low coverage of exclusive breastfeeding, and the lack of data for postnatal care and continues to track progress as these actions are implemented.

**New Key Recommended Action** 

Objective	Action Item	Suggested completion timeframe
NTDs	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	Q4 2022

