# Comoros ALMA Quarterly Report Quarter Four, 2021



#### **Scorecard for Accountability and Action**



Commodities Financed LLIN financing 2021 projection (% of need) Public sector RDT financing 2021 projection (% of 100 need) Public sector ACT financing 2021 projection (% of 100 Insecticide Resistance Monitoring, Implementation and Impact Insecticide classes with mosquito resistance in representative sentinel sites confirmed since 2010 Insecticide resistance monitored since 2015 and data reported to WHO National Insecticide Resistance Monitoring and Management Plan RDTs in stock (>6 months stock) ACTs in stock (>6 months stock) LLINIRS 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 population) On track to reduce case incidence by ≥40% by 2020 (vs 2015) On track to reduce case mortality by ≥40% by 2020 Tracer Indicators for Maternal and Child Health, NTDs and Covid 19 Mass Treatment Coverage for Neglected Tropical 33 Disease (NTD index, %)(2020) Estimated % of Total Population living with HIV who 62 have access to antiretroviral therapy (2020) Estimated % of children (0-14 years old) living with HIV who have access to antiretroviral therapy (2020) % deliveries assisted by skilled birth attendant 82 Postnatal care (within 48 hrs) 49 Exclusive breastfeeding (% children < 6 months) 23 Vitamin A Coverage 2020 (2 doses) DPT3 coverage 2020 (vaccination among 0-11 87 month olds) % Population Fully Vaccinated Against COVID-19 27

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 2020 was 4,546 and 7 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. In order to prevent widespread morbidity and mortality, it is of vital importance that we work to sustain the delivery of essential lifesaving 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 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.

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 but has been able to cover 27% of their population by the end of 2021.

#### **Malaria**

#### **Progress**

WHO has identified Comoros as being a country with the potential to eliminate local transmission of malaria. Comoros has adequate stocks of RDTs, and whilst there are less than three months of stocks of ACTs, additional ACTs are under procurement. 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 Hub.

#### **Impact**

The annual reported number of malaria cases in 2020 was 4,546 and 7 deaths.

#### **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
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		Malaria interventions continued to be implemented as planned. RDT and ACT stocks are sufficient, but the country has also implemented early procurement for 2022. The IRS was completed as planned. Funds have been made available to ensure that malaria interventions can continue safely

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

**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**

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 2020 in Comoros was low for both soil transmitted helminths (22%) and lymphatic filariasis (50%). Overall, the NTD preventive chemotherapy coverage index for Comoros in 2020 is 33, which represents a very substantial decrease compared with the 2019 index value (68)

**Previous Key Recommended Actions** 

Objective	Action Item	Suggested completion timeframe	Progress	Comments - key activities/accomplishments since last quarterly report
RMNCAH <sup>1</sup> : Optimise quality of care	a) Address the falling coverage of vitamin A	Q1 2021		The country carried out the 2 vitamin A campaigns in 2020. Whilst the first campaign was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, high coverage was obtained in the second campaign of the year
	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 2022		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 has been established
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		The country is conducting NTD control and elimination activities whilst respecting COVID-19 preventive measures. MDA targeting Lymphatic Filariasis and Soil Transmitted Helminths was carried out in November and December 2020. The country conducted the post MDA coverage survey. The country is conducting other NTD activities including routine case management of NTD identified cases, community mobilization, hydrocele and elephantiasis case detection and case management

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.



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