

Stepping up the fight against malaria ahead of the rainy season

If access to lifesaving malaria prevention, diagnosis and treatment services were disrupted or stopped during the COVID-19 response, especially ahead of the monsoon season in India and rainy season across Africa, the consequences could be dire. According to data modeling from the World Health Organization (WHO) and partners, these disruptions could result in a doubling in the number of malaria deaths in sub-Saharan Africa in 2020.

Since then, many countries and governments have shown incredible commitment to the fight against malaria, acting quickly and efficiently before the rainy season can set back progress. Malaria-affected countries had a critical window in which to safely conduct interventions – such as distributing long-lasting insecticide treated nets (ITNs), completing indoor residual spraying (IRS) campaigns, and administering Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention (SMC) – to save lives and protect health systems.



Source: RBM Partnership to End Malaria
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.



Nigeria steps up to protect 2 million children

- In order to protect children from malaria during this year's peak transmission season, Nigeria's Borno state resolved to implement evidence-based intervention in a house-to-house strategy. Giving effective antimalarial treatment at monthly intervals during this period has been shown to be 75% protective against uncomplicated and severe malaria in children under 5 years of age.
- On July 14, Borno state government in collaboration with Federal Ministry of Health and WHO, deployed around **8,000** community health care workers to deliver **SMC to about 2 million children** aged 3-59 months throughout the state.
- Representing the world's highest burden of malaria, Nigeria accounts for 25% of global malaria cases.



No matter the challenge, net distribution in South Sudan goes on

- South Sudan is no stranger to overcoming public health challenges, having historically faced prolonged flooding and political unrest which have made malaria prevention efforts and campaigns such as the distribution of insecticide-treated bed nets difficult. As COVID-19 became an additional challenge, local leaders recognized that the mass distribution campaign needed to adapt before peak rainy season in June and committed to act quickly.
- Dedicated health workers in [South Sudan successfully distributed 983,704 bed nets](#) by May, ensuring the continuation of antimalaria efforts while adhering to proper training and social distancing measures.



State of malaria snapshot

- On July 16, Malaria Consortium announced that the first treatment cycle of their [2020 SMC](#) campaign is underway, on course to reach **12 million** children in Burkina Faso, Chad and Nigeria
- On July 16, the Asia Pacific Leaders Malaria Alliance and Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network [launched a technical dashboard](#) highlighting successful efforts and the progress made towards malaria elimination in Asia Pacific
- On July 13, [The Lancet](#) published a new report that suggested deaths from HIV, tuberculosis and malaria could surge in poor and middle-income countries as a result of severe disruptions during the COVID-19 pandemic, including a 36% increase in malaria deaths if mosquito net distributions are discontinued
- On July 6, [the Pan American Health Organization](#) urged countries to continue actions against malaria in the Americas, especially among vulnerable populations



Resources:

- [Country by country modeling analysis](#) of potential impact of COVID in sub-Saharan Africa
- Check the status of anti-malaria campaigns in your country with the RBM Partnership's [country tracker](#)
- WHO updated Q&A on use of [hydroxychloroquine](#) and [artemisia](#)
- RBM Partnership COVID-19 and malaria [resource page](#)
- [Recording](#) of the RBM Partnership's previous media briefing on COVID-19



What's coming up?

27 July: Imperial College London to release updated modelling data of COVID's impact on malaria across Sub-Saharan Africa

11 August: RBM Partnership media briefing on the RTS,S vaccine – one year on

20 August: World Mosquito Day

24-28 August: WHO AFRO regional meeting