

## Speed Up Scale-Up: A global call to boost protection against malaria for pregnant women in Africa

Malaria in pregnancy is a major public health problem, responsible for 10,000 maternal deaths globally each year, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa. During pregnancy, women are more susceptible to malaria infection and at greater risk of illness, severe anaemia and death.

**Tomorrow, the RBM Partnership to End Malaria's Malaria in Pregnancy Working Group will issue an urgent appeal to leaders and health policymakers to increase access to intermittent preventive treatment during pregnancy (IPTp) among eligible pregnant women in sub-Saharan Africa.**

We invite you to join us to discuss the essential steps required to scale up coverage of three doses of IPTp to reach all eligible women in sub-Saharan Africa by 2025.

### **The RBM Partnership will host a full briefing on malaria in pregnancy (6 October) at 16:00 CEST\*.**

#### **Speakers:**

- Dr. Anshu Banerjee, Director Department of Maternal, Newborn, Child, Adolescent Health & Ageing, World Health Organization
- Dr. Pedro Alonso, Director Global Malaria Programme, World Health Organization
- Dr. Aminata Cisse ep. Traore, Deputy Director of Reproductive Health, Directorate-General of Health and Public Hygiene, Ministry of Health and Public Hygiene, Mali

**Register for the session and submit your questions [here](#).**

\*14:00 GMT | 16:00 CAT | 15:00 WAT



### **Malaria strikes hardest against pregnant women and children**

- Pregnant women and children under five in sub-Saharan Africa are disproportionately impacted by malaria. Malaria infection during pregnancy carries substantial risks for a pregnant woman, her fetus and the newborn child.
  - Last year, an estimated 11 million pregnant women in sub-Saharan Africa – 29% of all pregnancies – were infected with malaria.
  - Nearly 900,000 children in 38 African countries were born with a low birth weight due to malaria in pregnancy.
  - While malaria deaths in children under five dropped in 2018, children under five still accounted for two-thirds (67%) of all malaria deaths worldwide.
  - There is a strong correlation between malaria and anemia in children under 5. In 2018, approximately 14 million children in sub-Saharan Africa had moderate or severe anemia. Severe anemia is a major contributor to child mortality.

Supporting case study stories are also available on request from community health nurses, including:



Rosemund Awumi, Community Health Nurse, Maternity, Abokobi Health Centre, Accra

“ Before we had any malaria preventative treatment for pregnant women at the maternity clinic, we saw too many stillborn births and miscarriages, and it was heart-breaking ”

“ We are all striving for elimination, from one end of the country to the other. We know how destructive it is on every level. I do believe that it is feasible, at the rate of progress we are making and with real, long-term support from all sectors, not just health ”



### Continuing life-saving malaria campaigns despite COVID-19

- New data confirms that 90% of life-saving malaria intervention campaigns scheduled for this year are on track across Africa, helping to protect millions from the disease and avoid a severe increase in malaria cases and deaths in the face of significant challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The status of the global malaria fight was a focus of the RBM Partnership’s high-level virtual event ***Zero Malaria Challenge: How the lessons of the past can inspire progress to end malaria***, held on the side-lines of this year’s United Nations General Assembly discussion under the leadership of His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya in his capacity as Chair of the African Leaders Malaria Alliance.

Watch the recorded video session [here](#).



## State of malaria snapshot

- On 1 October, the [RBM Partnership](#) announced that over 90% of life-saving malaria campaigns are on track in the majority of malaria-affected countries despite the challenges presented by COVID-19
- On 21 September, [The Lancet](#) published new modelling analysis which found that the substantial progress made in reducing the burden of malaria in Africa since 2000 could be jeopardised if the COVID-19 pandemic affects the availability of key malaria control interventions.
- On 15 September, [Médecins Sans Frontières](#) launched a mass drug administration campaign to drive down malaria cases and deaths in the Central African Republic.
- On 14 September, researchers from the [University of Oxford](#) warned that Africa should be wary of a new Asian mosquito species that has the potential to spread malaria into Africa's urban areas.
- On 13 September, the Global Fund released its [2020 Results Report](#) highlighting that deaths caused by AIDS, TB and malaria each year have been reduced by nearly 50% since the peak of the epidemics in the countries where it invests. The report also warned that deaths from these diseases could skyrocket in the next 12 months due to COVID-19.



## 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 our [country tracker](#)
- WHO updated Q&A on use of [hydroxychloroquine](#) and [artemisia](#)
- RBM Partnership to End Malaria COVID-19 and malaria [resource page](#)
- Recording of the RBM Partnership to End Malaria and World Health Organization malaria and COVID-19 webinars
- Recordings of the RBM Partnership's recent media briefings on COVID-19
  - [Amidst national shutdowns, countries mobilize to continue life-saving malaria campaigns](#)
  - [Malaria commodities: ensuring availability and affordability of life-saving tools](#)
  - [RTS,S vaccine: one year on](#)



## What's coming up?

**6 October:** RBM Partnership media briefing to launch new 'Speed Up Scale Up' call to action on malaria in pregnancy – press release to be issued with further information

**11 October:** International Day of the Girl Child

**15 October:** 15 Years of Fueling the Fight to End Malaria in Africa: A conversation with African leaders around the transformative impact of partnership with the U.S. President's Malaria Initiative

**24 October:** United Nations Day

**28 October:** World Malaria Day in the Americas

**6 November:** Commemoration of Southern African Development Community (SADC) Malaria Day