

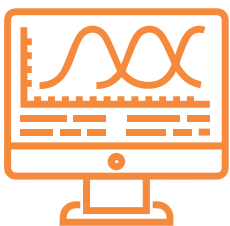
# Jointly addressing endemic malaria and pandemic COVID-19

As the COVID-19 pandemic spreads rapidly around the globe, there is an urgent need to aggressively tackle the novel coronavirus while ensuring that other killer diseases, such as malaria, are not neglected. The WHO Global Malaria Programme is leading a cross-partner effort to mitigate the negative impact of the coronavirus in malaria-affected countries and, where possible, contribute towards a successful COVID-19 response. The work is being carried out in close collaboration with colleagues based at WHO headquarters, regional offices and country level.



## Sounding an urgent call

WHO is urgently calling on countries to maintain core malaria control services while protecting health workers and communities against COVID-19 transmission. A [WHO statement](#), shared widely on 25 March, was issued in response to reports that some countries in sub-Saharan Africa had suspended mass insecticide-treated net (ITN) campaigns. WHO is encouraging countries to move forward with vector control activities, including ITN and indoor residual spraying campaigns. Such campaigns have been the mainstay of malaria prevention efforts in the region for nearly two decades. Countries are also strongly advised not to scale back efforts to detect and treat malaria. A [Q&A](#) provides additional background.



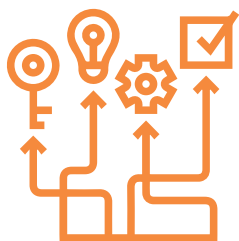
## Modelling the potential impact

The findings of a new [modelling analysis](#) from WHO and partners reinforce the urgent call to maintain essential malaria control services during the pandemic. Under the [worst-case scenario](#), in which all ITN campaigns are suspended and there is a 75% reduction in access to effective antimalarial medicines, a staggering 769 000 people in sub-Saharan Africa could die from malaria this year alone. This represents a doubling in the number of malaria deaths compared to 2018 and a return to mortality levels last seen 20 years ago.



## Delivering guidance

To support malaria-affected countries, WHO has issued **technical guidance** on how to safely maintain malaria control services in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. *Tailoring malaria interventions in the COVID-19 response*, developed in close collaboration with partners, includes guidance on the prevention of infection through vector control and chemoprevention, testing, treatment of cases, clinical services, supply chain and laboratory activities. The document is consistent with broader WHO **guidance** on maintaining essential services in COVID-19 settings.



## Aligning partners

In March 2020, before the pandemic had secured a strong footing in Africa, WHO established a mechanism to promote collaboration between partners and ensure a coordinated response. Malaria experts and leaders from nearly 20 organizations are lending their time and expertise across seven workstreams. Through twice weekly calls convened by WHO, they share updates on a variety of issues, from disruptions in the supply of key malaria commodities to the latest developments in clinical drug trials. This collaborative work has been welcomed by Member States as they seek to continue providing essential health services while limiting COVID-19 transmission and caring for people with symptoms of the coronavirus.

