

ALMA summary report | Quarter 1, 2026

Malaria: a multisectoral challenge with intersectoral solutions



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ALMA Scorecard for Accountability & Action

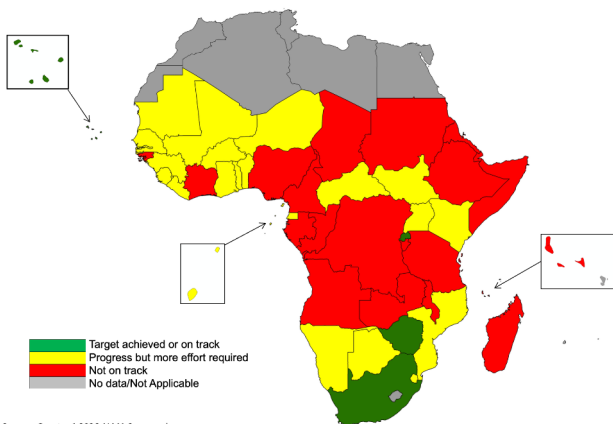
Access the quarter 1, 2026 scorecard and country reports.

→ alma2030.org/quarter-1-2026/

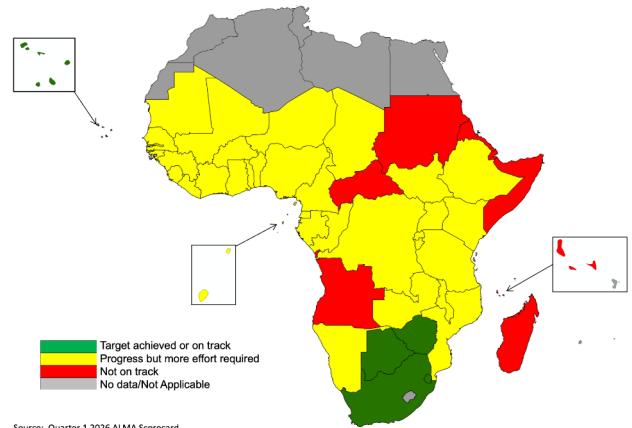


Introduction

As Maria, a market woman, held her burning, whimpering and delirious little 16-month-old boy in her arms, carefully rocking him, waiting outside for her husband, a bricklayer, to wake the community health worker; she lifted her face and sent a desperate prayer upwards to the dark, star-filled sky for her baby. Her 8-year-old daughter had already missed 8 weeks of school this year because of malaria, and the previous year, she had lost her middle child when they failed to get him treatment on time. Maria and her family live more than five kilometres from the nearest health facility.



On track to reduce malaria incidence by at least 70% by 2024 (vs 2015)



On track to reduce malaria mortality by at least 70% by 2024 (vs 2015)

Around the African continent, in Nigeria, the DRC, Niger, Uganda, Tanzania, etc., sister country after sister country, mothers were holding their little children, offering the same prayer to the heavens! By the end of the day, 1,200 of these precious lives will be lost, crushing the spirits of these mothers and their families. Maria and her husband, between them, lose at least 20 weeks a year due to malaria when either a child or they themselves contract malaria. This translates into depleted household earnings and increased medical and related costs.

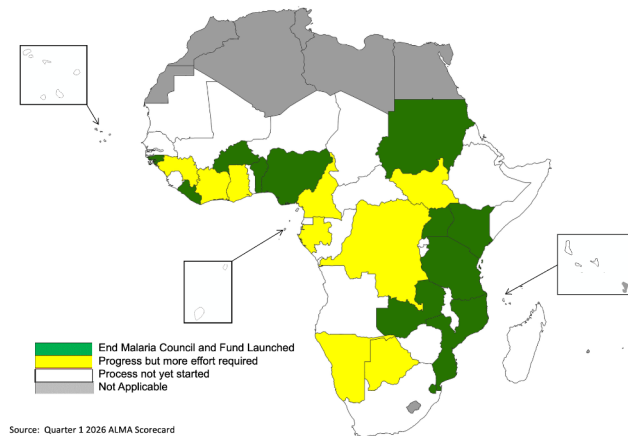
Multisectoral drivers

Maria was very proud to be part of a consortium of market women who were purchasing and selling rice from government-irrigated farms next to her village. Her husband worked for a major construction company building low-cost houses in the district. There were lots of jobs with the new government: new mines opening, major roadworks, and dams. Unfortunately, malaria had also become more aggressive. Some people attributed it to frequent flooding from climate change, but Maria realised that even families far from the flood zones who worked in or lived near the new projects were also contracting malaria in large numbers.

Anecdotal as it was, Maria's observation can be backed by data and science.

The drivers

Research by AFIDEP has demonstrated conclusively that increased irrigation in sub-Saharan Africa correlates directly with higher incidences of malaria, schistosomiasis, and dengue. A 54% increase in malaria prevalence has been recorded in some areas. Additionally, over 25% of emerging infectious diseases are linked to the shift to irrigation from rain-fed agriculture.

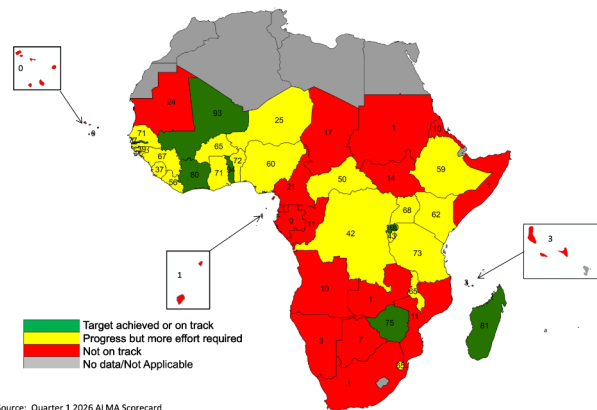


Source: Quarter 1 2026 ALMA Scorecard

End Malaria & NTD Councils and Funds launched

Key sectors and their roles

- Agriculture and irrigation, extractive industries (mining/logging), environment, sanitation and water management:** Integrate vector control into Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), management of the project and funding. Assume responsibility for key vector control interventions in affected areas. Improved staff housing design (for example, screens) to prevent mosquito entry. Partner with health in ensuring early detection and treatment in affected areas.
- Infrastructure and housing:** Integrate vector control into EIAs, project management and funding. Assume responsibility for key vector control interventions in affected areas during the construction period. improved housing design (for example, screens) to prevent mosquito entry.
- Education:** Schools play a crucial role in awareness and distribution of mosquito nets and other vector control products to children, and teaching prevention methods.
- Tourism and hospitality:** Whilst the other sectors contribute and/or enhance the drivers, malaria control and elimination removes a major deterrent to travel, significantly raising occupancy rates.
- Multisectoral role of finance and development planning:** Malaria is a disease of poverty. It is most prevalent in the poorest and least developed areas. It hinders economic growth and poverty reduction by reducing cognitive development and leading to poor learning outcomes in children, compromising the quality of the workforce, increasing absenteeism and reducing income. Finance has the responsibility of ensuring that the development policies and financial planning adequately address this shared responsibility and are fully integrated into sectoral programmes and funding.



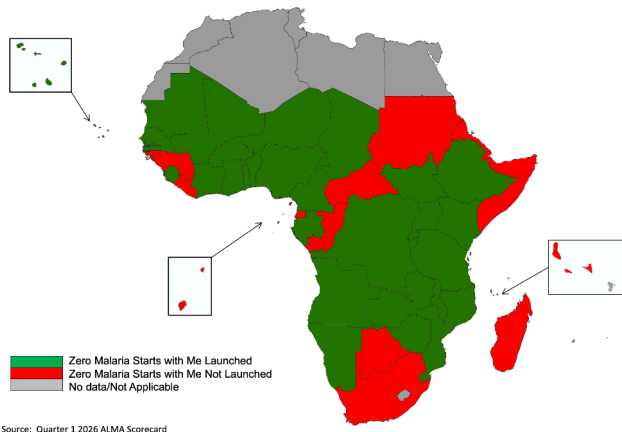
Source: Quarter 1 2026 ALMA Scorecard

Mass Treatment Coverage for Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD index, %)(2024)

In addition to the irrigation canals, ditches associated with construction and mines, just like flooded fields, provide stable habitats for not just Anopheles mosquitoes, but also for Culex mosquitoes, which carry West Nile virus and Japanese encephalitis.

Implications for sectors

The message is therefore clear. Malaria is not just a health issue but a complex development challenge that requires a multisectoral approach spanning environmental management, multiple-sector policies, and community engagement. Malaria is also fully preventable and treatable. Each of these sectors must play their role in both preventing malaria and, where required, in early detection and treatment.

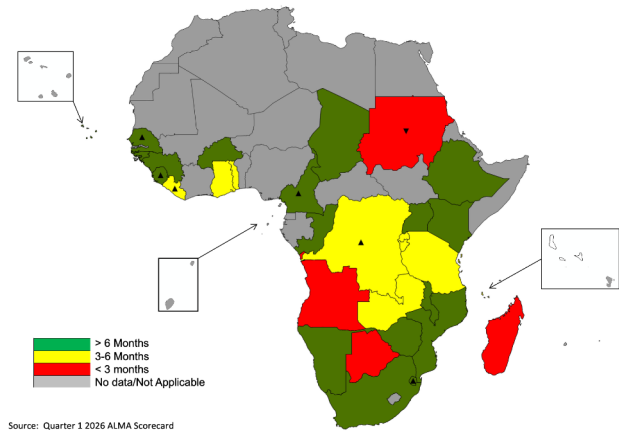


Source: Quarter 1 2026 ALMA Scorecard

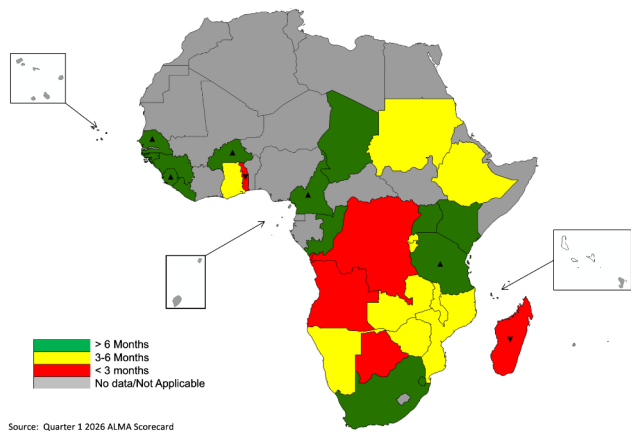
Zero Malaria Starts with Me launched

Multisectoral and intersectoral engagement

Based on the above roles, different sectors will need to work together with health to share data and plan the necessary integrated vector control, surveillance, early detection and treatment.



ACTs in stock
(>6 months stock)



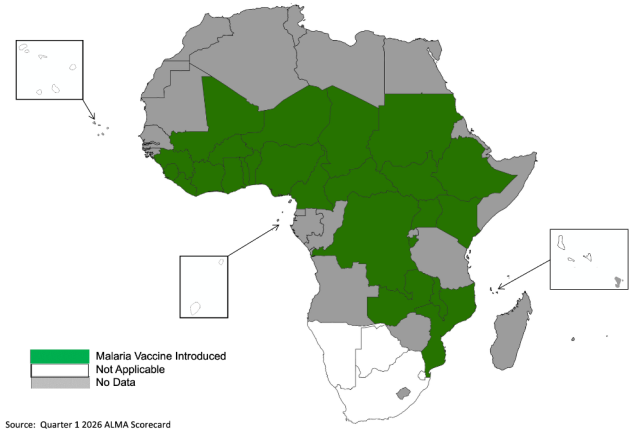
RDTs in stock
(>6 months stock)

As reflected above, this will require:

- **Malaria-smart policies:** Incorporating malaria control into development projects, such as building mosquito-proof houses in new settlements.
- **Shared objectives:** Aligning the goals of different sectors (like increasing agricultural production) with health outcomes (like reducing mosquito breeding sites).
- **Collaborative action:** Bringing together governments, traditional leaders, NGOs, and the private sector to share responsibility for both malaria control and socioeconomic development.

Conclusion

Maria is living in a time of great socio-economic and political upheaval, as well as accelerated growth and development driven by massive leaps in technology, increased trade and sharing of skills. The introduction of new technologies cannot be left to health alone. Maria can also live in a time of hope and deliverance.



Malaria vaccine introduction

Through multi-sectoral and inter-sectoral engagement, the chances of defeating malaria once and for all have increased. The ball is in our court. Together we can win the fight for a malaria-free Africa. Management Sciences for Health, working with ALMA and Malaria No More UK, has determined that the world stands to gain US\$231 billion in GDP if the 2030 malaria targets are met. This remarkable boost in family welfare, learning, and a more productive workforce is within reach.

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