



# Health and sanitation in Africa in light of COVID-19



As the world comes together to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to ensure increased investments in health systems. Essential services and operations must continue to protect the lives of people affected by malaria, neglected tropical diseases, vaccine preventable diseases and in need of improved access to adequate sanitation.



## COVID-19 AND MALARIA

COVID-19 highly threatens decades of progress made against malaria. We must sustain malaria control efforts to prevent, detect and treat malaria cases and avoid a rise in cases and deaths while preventing the spread of COVID-19.



## COVID-19 AND IMMUNIZATION

Disruption of routine immunization, because of COVID-19, could result in a future increase in vaccine preventable diseases. We urge countries to safeguard immunization programmes to continue to deliver lifesaving vaccines during the COVID-19 pandemic.



## COVID-19 AND NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES

Neglected tropical diseases are diseases of poverty and inequity. It is important that health systems be strengthened to ensure prompt diagnosis, treatment and care of neglected tropical diseases for patients presenting to healthcare facilities.



## COVID-19 AND TUBERCULOSIS

The risk of death in TB patients approaches 50% if left untreated and may be higher in the elderly or in the presence of comorbidity. Support for uninterrupted TB preventive treatment and treatment of TB disease should be ensured alongside the COVID-19 response.



## COVID-19 AND SANITATION

1 in 3 people still live without adequate sanitation facilities in Africa, putting their health and their lives at risk. It is now more important than ever that we work to increase access to adequate sanitation and handwashing facilities to protect Africa from COVID-19.



## PROTECT HEALTH WORKERS

Health workers should be trained in infection prevention and control measures for COVID-19. Visits at the local health centre should also be used as opportunities to disseminate messages to encourage behaviors to reduce transmission risk of the COVID-19 virus, to identify signs and symptoms of COVID-19 disease, and to provide guidance on what to do if symptoms emerge.