

ALMA Youth Strategy 2020-2030

Harnessing the Demographic Dividend to End Malaria and Improve Health Outcomes in Africa



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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ALMA	African Leaders Malaria Alliance
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AYAC	ALMA Youth Advisory Council
BMGF	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
CIFF	Children's Investment Fund Foundation
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NMCP	National Malaria Control Programme
RBM	Roll Back Malaria
UHC	Universal Health Coverage
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WH0	World Health Organization

1. CONTEXT

1.1 Progress towards malaria control and elimination in Africa

Following the unprecedented decline in the burden of malaria since 2000, and broad achievement of Millennium Development Goals Target 6C on the continent, African Heads of State and Government in 2016 endorsed the Catalytic Framework to End AIDS, TB and Eliminate Malaria in Africa by 2030¹. According to the 2020 World Malaria Report, 1.5 billion malaria cases and 7.6 million deaths were averted globally, between 2000 and 2019. The vast majority of these (84% of cases and 94% of deaths) were from the African WHO region. Despite these impressive gains, progress, has stagnated in recent years. The rate of decline in malaria incidence reduced between 2015 and 2019 compared to previous years and most countries in Africa will not meet the Global Technical Strategy for Malaria (2016–2030) goal to reduce the number of malaria cases by 40% in 2020 compared to 2015 levels. The 2020 World Malaria Report calls for innovation in approaches and tools, in addition to other efforts to reinvigorate the malaria fight, and integration of malaria control and elimination in the journey towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

Huge efforts at global, continental and country level have been initiated to reinforce the fight against malaria. African Heads of State and Government in 2018, with the aim of strengthening national, regional and continental efforts towards a malaria-free Africa, launched the Zero Malaria Starts with Me, Pan-African Campaign. Zero Malaria Starts with Me engages diverse stakeholder groups across countries to empower communities to take ownership of malaria efforts, mobilise resources and hold leaders accountable in the fight against malaria². Other efforts to accelerate progress include the High Burden High Impact Approach, which focuses on accelerating reduction of the diseases in 11 countries that in 2017 were responsible for 80% of global malaria cases. Ten of these countries are in Africa (Republics of Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Republic of Tanzania).

1.2 The African Leaders Malaria Alliance

The African Leaders Malaria Alliance (ALMA), a coalition of 55 African Union Heads of State and Government was established in 2009 to launch a coordinated and effective response to the malaria pandemic. ALMA was created in recognition of:

- The importance of malaria as a major health and development challenge.
- The responsibility of African leaders to spearhead the fight against malaria and other major public health and development threats on the continent.

1 Catalytic Framework to End AIDS, TB and Eliminate Malaria in Africa by 2030 2 https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20180707/african-leaders-launch-new-continent-wide-campaign-malaria-free-africa-zero

- The need for collective action to achieve continental malaria control goals and,
- The need for African leaders to prominently participate in the global movement to halt the incidence of malaria and other diseases, as part of the Millennium Development Goals and now the Sustainable Development Goals.

ALMA is led by a Chairperson who is a Head of State and Government of one of the AU Member States. The ALMA secretariat is responsible for delivering the vision of the AU Heads of State and Government. The focus of ALMA's work includes: keeping the fight against malaria and other health priorities high on national, regional and continental agendas, strengthening accountability, transparency and action for malaria and other health priorities including supporting the implementation of country scorecards; supporting the mobilisation of resources including by establishing End Malaria Funds and Councils and providing a forum to share information and best practices on combating malaria and achieving Universal Health Coverage.

1.2.1 ALMA Chair's Legacy Agenda

His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta, set his agenda upon assuming Chairpersonship of ALMA for the period 2020-2022, outlining four key results-based priority areas. These legacy goals are: (1) Digitisation to provide real time access to health-related data including sharing of Scorecards for Accountability and Action at country level to facilitate evidence-informed policies and programmes; (2) Engagement with Regional Economic Communities (RECs) as key pillars to implement AU Malaria commitments; (3) Establishing End Malaria Councils and Funds to boost multisectoral action, resource mobilization and advocacy and (4) Establishing an ALMA Youth Army to create a broader social movement to fight malaria and contribute to improved maternal and child health, and access to universal health-care. The ALMA Chair has underscored the importance of increased leadership and participation of youth in his legacy agenda. This is in line with the African Union Constitutive Act³, the *African Youth Charter*⁴ and the AU Roadmap on Harnessing the Demographic Dividend Through Investments in Youth⁵ that give priority to youth development and empowerment, emphasizing the importance of youth participation, involvement and representation in the development of the continent.

The purpose of this strategy is to provide a framework for engaging youth across Africa to develop a continental ALMA Youth Army for malaria elimination and contribute to the broader health and development agenda.

3 The constitutive act of the African Union. https://au.int/sites/default/files/pages/34873-file-constitutiveact_en.pdf 4 African Youth Charter. https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/7789-treaty-0033_-_african_youth_charter_e.pdf 5 AU Roadmap on Harnessing the Demographic Dividend Through Investments in Youth. https://wcaro.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pubpdf/AU 2017 DD ROADMAP Final - EN.pdf

2. RATIONALE

The African Union Charter defines youth as the population aged between 15 and 35 years. Currently youth account for 60% of Africa's population and 1.8 billion of the world's population. Despite representing the largest segment of the population, youth are not adeqautely or systematically engaged in the continent's fight to eliminate malaria, that can contribute towards achievement of UHC. The youth have vast potential to contribute significantly to the fight against malaria because of their large numbers, energy, innovation, creativity and potential to influence. Additionally, youth are affected by all major public health challenges including malaria.

Africa's renaissance cannot be realised without adequate investment in the youth who constitute an important part of the continent's population. Tapping into Africa's youth bulge lays a strong foundation for achieving *Agenda 2063*⁶, Africa's master plan for transforming the continent into the global powerhouse of the future. Agenda 2063 is the continent's strategic framework that aims to deliver on its goal for inclusive and sustainable development. The elimination of malaria and addressing other health priorities on the continent is embedded in goal 3 of Agenda 2063 (a healthy and well-nourished population) but is also a necessity to the achievement of the broader structural transformation agenda of the African continent.

This strategy was developed to bridge this gap and mainstream malaria control and elimination efforts into existing youth structures and similarly, systematically involve youth in existing malaria elimination initiatives across the continent.

3. ALMA YOUTH STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Following the announcement of His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta's Legacy Agenda, the ALMA Secretariat initiated the development of this ALMA Youth strategy. The process of development of the Strategy is anchored by the voices of the youth gathered through a participatory process that included:

- Mapping of youth leaders in existing structures across Africa and the diaspora
- Engaging the youth in shaping the strategy through crowdsourcing of information digitally through an e-survey conducted in English, French and Portuguese and disseminated through emails, Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Website platforms and other methods. The purpose of the survey was to crowd source views from youth on how they would like to be engaged in the Malaria Youth Army. Responses were obtained from 115 participants across the continent.
- Conducting a public Pan-African Youth Virtual Consultation to further engage young leaders and gather their direct input on their expectations to guide the ALMA Youth Strategy development. Eighty-five participants attended the consultation. Participants included young leaders from all over Africa and the diaspora⁷.
- Conducting two closed sessions with Anglophone and Francophone young leaders to review and validate the recommendations from the public Pan-African Youth Virtual Consultation to provide inputs on the ALMA Youth Strategy. The closed sessions were attended by 13 English and 7 Francophone participants from different youth forums and councils across the continent.
- The above engagements brought together over 110 young people from African countries representing all regions of the continent. Based on the feedback and inputs from youth, ALMA has defined the vision, mission, objectives and overall guiding principles of the ALMA youth army strategy.

⁷ AU Youth Advisory Council, Youth Ambassador Office of the First lady of Namibia, Malaria Youth Ambassadors, Medica Students, One Young World Youth Ambassadors, Youth Leaders for Health, Safe Sports, Digital Health Advocates, Founder of Matibabu (Malaria detecting device), ECOWAS Youth Council, EAC Youth Ambassadors Platform, SAYOF- SADC Youth Forum, Commonwealth Youth Council, IFMSA, The international federation of medical students associations, Nothing but Nets Champions , MNM , RBM Youth Champions, Block Malaria Project, The International Pharmaceutical Students' Federation (IPSF-AfRO), Youth Leader For Health, Global Shapers, Tech 4 Health Council, One Young Word Africa, Speak up Africa, Public Health Advocate, EAC Youth Ambassador, AfU Youth Advisory Council, Africa Youth Advisory Board on Disaster Risk Reduction (AYAB DRR), International Youth Alliance for Family Planning-, ONE Africa Champion, Impact Santé, Zipline International,...

4. VISION, MISSION, OBJECTIVES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

4.1. Vision

Youth across Africa advocating and driving action towards malaria elimination and contributing towards Universal Health Coverage.

4.2. Mission

To promote mainstreaming of malaria into existing youth structures at continental, regional and country levels and have young people actively engaged in/at the centre of malaria elimination efforts in the context of Zero Malaria Starts with Me and Universal Health Coverage through advocacy, communication, and evidence-informed action.

4.3. Objectives

ALMA's approach is to ensure meaningful youth engagement in the fight against malaria and access to better health care services. The specific objectives of the youth strategy are:

- 1. At continental and regional levels, and through the engagement of young Africans in the diaspora, youth in existing structures are mobilized to form an 'ALMA youth army' to contribute to ending malaria and expanding Universal Health Coverage.
- 2. At country level, a cadre of youth ('youth armies') in existing leadership positions across sectors are advocating for malaria elimination and the expansion of Universal Health Coverage and are mobilizing collective youth-driven solutions, towards ending malaria.
- 3. Young people access advocacy tools, digital toolkits and best practice documents on the ALMA Scorecard Knowledge Hub to facilitate informed action against malaria.

4.4. Guiding principles

- Equality: the successful implementation of the ALMA Youth Strategy relies on the understanding that all human beings are equal. For this to be realised, all social classes and categories of youth structures including hard to reach geographical communities and areas will be targeted to advocate and promote access to health for all.
- **Innovation and creativity:** The African landscape is not lagging behind in the current technological advancements. The current tools of digitisation and technology will be promoted to enhance data sharing including through using scorecards, knowledge hubs, innovation and creative ideas.
- **Integration:** Mainstreaming malaria and universal health coverage (UHC) into the existing youth structures is key in the journey towards malaria elimination and will increase awareness and ownership from the continental to the community level.

5. ACTIVITIES

5.1.

. **OBJECTIVE 1:** AT CONTINENTAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS AND THROUGH THE ENGAGEMENT OF YOUNG AFRICANS IN THE DIASPORA, THE YOUTH IN EXISTING STRUCTURES ARE MOBILISED TO FORM AN 'ALMA YOUTH ARMY' TO CONTRIBUTE TO ENDING MALARIA AND CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE

Activities will be carried out in collaboration with the African Union Regional Economic Communities, regional malaria initiatives such as the Elimination 8 and Sahel Elimination Initiative, as well as with the African Union Commission, relevant African Union agencies and other stakeholders including health partners and funders.



Activities:

5.1.1. Map existing youth structures and groups

Building on youth engagements initiated during the strategy development phase, youth structures and groups operating at the continental, regional and country levels will be identified through online searches, existing networks and collaborations, and other referrals. Identified entities will be assessed, including for mission, scope of work and level of operation. A database of youth structures will be developed.



5.1.2. Establish formal collaborations between ALMA and youth groups from all AU regions Identified youth structures and groups will be engaged to determine suitability and interest in collaboration to form the ALMA 'Youth Army'. Emphasis will be placed on geographical representation to maximize opportunities for all AU regions to be involved in developing the Youth Army. Youth Champions from collaborating entities and their networks, and other youth leaders and influencers will constitute the ALMA Youth Army (see Annex 1).



5.1.3. Integrate youth champions in ALMA activities such as malaria and UHC advocacy at continental level: collaborations with Regional Economic Communities to establish regional action plans and accountability structures and other regional malaria and UHC events.

Through the participation of youth champions, the voice of the youth will be integrated and amplified in ALMA advocacy activities such as for World Malaria Day, Zero Malaria Starts With Me launches and events, and regional malaria events. Youth Champions will also participate in other ALMA regional activities including through the development and use of regional malaria scorecard management tools. Opportunities for involving the ALMA youth army in advocacy for UHC will also be prioritized.



5.1.4. Identify youth-centered events at regional and continental level, such as international and national youth days, where the youth army can influence and mobilize young people to advance malaria elimination and UHC.

The ALMA Youth Army will map youth-centered events and initiatives where malaria and UHC advocacy can be inserted for a wide reach to youth and their networks. ALMA will support development of messaging and other requirements for mainstreaming malaria and UHC advocacy in these youth mechanisms.



5.1.5. Support youth integration into identified malaria and UHC forums and initiatives at continental and regional levels.

ALMA in collaboration with malaria, health and development partners will explore opportunities for effective engagement on youth into UHC and malaria forums at regional and continental levels such as Universal Health Coverage day celebrations, annual WHO-led Africa Health Forums etc.



5.1.6. Explore opportunities to support youth innovations to enhance malaria and UHC messaging, advocacy, accountability and action

Youth innovations such as Matibabu (a malaria detecting device) ⁸, enhancing messaging and advocacy for malaria and UHC will be encouraged and supported by ALMA.



5.1.7. Communication, Information and Publicity

Guided by the ALMA Communication Strategy, the ALMA secretariat shall develop a youth engagement communications plan that will use print, electronic and social media tools to communicate activities of the 'youth army' to all relevant stakeholders. ALMA will leverage the global power of digital communication, alongside traditional media, to amplify youth voices, raise awareness on youth action and mobilize young people to advance malaria elimination and UHC.

By leveraging key regional and international health events and youth days, a variety of communication assets such as press releases, op-eds, feature stories, social media messages, factsheets, infographics and documentaries will be developed and disseminated to relevant stakeholders and target groups to increase awareness about the urgency of defeating malaria and create demand for youth action towards ending the disease burden on the continent.

8 A device that detects tell-tale signs of malaria by shining a red beam of light on the patient's finger, invented by a young Ugandan, Brian Gitta

The specific communication tactics will be aligned to the implementation plan of the ALMA Youth Strategy.



. **OBJECTIVE 2:** AT COUNTRY LEVEL, A CADRE OF YOUTH (COUNTRY YOUTH ARMIES) IN EXISTING LEADERSHIP POSITIONS FROM VARIOUS SECTORS ARE ADVOCATING FOR MALARIA ELIMINATION AND THE EXPANSION OF UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE AND ARE MOBILIZING COLLECTIVE YOUTH_ DRIVEN SOLUTIONS, INCLUDING RESOURCE MOBILIZATION TOWARDS ENDING MALARIA.

Implemention of the activities under this objective, though facilitated by ALMA, will be led by country collaborating entities including national malaria control programmes, youth organizations, End Malaria Councils and structures responsible for the country scorecard mechanisms.



5.2.1. Map and form collaborations with existing youth structures at country level.

Under this activity, further mapping of youth structures will be carried out focussing at the country level, including national and sub-national groups and strutures. Identified groups will be engaged, country youth champions identified and collaborations established.



5.2.2. Establish country-specific youth armies.

Country collaborating entities will lead the establishment of country youth armies with support from ALMA. Roles, responsibilities, and scope of work of country youth armies will be defined depending on country context.



5.2.3. Support the integration of youth-led efforts to strengthen the country scorecard mechanism by orienting youth in the use of the scorecard and supporting youth engagement in scorecard review forums

ALMA will facitate trainings of country youth armies in the use of scorecard tools to enhance action and accountability, transparency and advocacy. Through existing linkages with country scorecard mechanisms, ALMA will support integration of youth participation in the implementation of country scorecards tools including for community engagement.



5.2.4. Support the formation of linkages between the youth and high-level advocacy and resource mobilization structures such as country End Malaria Councils and End Malaria Funds

Through existing country collaborations and where opportuntities arise, ALMA will support linkages between youth and country End Malaria Councils and End Malaria Funds, and other high-level advocacy and resource mobilization structures.



5.2.5. Support youth engagement in malaria and UHC awareness through public communication

Support youth led awareness campaigns through traditional, print, electronic and social media media, which will result in increased public information and motivate young people to take action against a diseases that stalls progress and socio-economic development.



5.2.6. Identify youth structures and events at country level where youth armies can influence and mobilize young people to advance malaria and UHC

Country youth armies and in-country collaborating organizations and entities will identify youth-centered events and initiatives to mainstream malaria and UHC advocacy at national and sub-national level. ALMA will support the development of advocacy and communication messages for these activities.



5.2.7 Through existing partnerships, support youth participation in national malaria programme activities including community and social mobilisation and linking with existing Social and Behaviour Change Communication and transformational development activities

Youth participation in the implementation of National Malaria Strategic Plans will be supported in the context of National Malaria Control Programmes with the support of ALMA and Partners. This may include youth-led community engagement to stimulate social and behavior change, and action to enable deployment and monitoring of malaria interventions.

5.3.

3. **OBJECTIVE 3:** YOUNG PEOPLE ACCESS AND USE ADVOCACY TOOLS, DIGITAL TOOLKITS AND BEST PRACTICE DOCUMENTS TO FACILITATE INFORMED ACTION AGAINST MALARIA

5.3.1 Through the ALMA Scorecard Knowledge Hub, advocacy materials and toolkits for youth advocates will be developed and disseminated to promote online youth training on malaria and UHC advocacy. The Knowledge Hub will also be used for information sharing on malaria and UHC among young people, to influence evidence – informed decision-making and drive action on transforming health services provided to the communities.



5.3.2 Document and disseminate best practices of youth engagement in the fight against malaria.

6. COORDINATION, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The ALMA Secretariat, working with NMCPs and partners, will support the coordination of countrylevel implementation, monitoring and reporting on activities.

The ALMA Secretariat working with the African Union and the RBM partnership to End Malaria will support the engagement of key stakeholders including youth organizations, multilateral organizations (UN, Commonwealth Secretariat, the, WHO, UNICEF, CIFF, BMGF etc.) and other youth-oriented organisations to support the planning, programming and execution of this strategy.

The ALMA secretariat with the support of the AUC and RBM Partnership to End Malaria will provide quarterly updates on the implementation of the strategy to the ALMA Chair and integrate progress updates into ALMA reports to Member States.

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

A Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework will be developed within one year of implementation of the strategy, in consultation with country implementing partners. The M&E framework will be used to measure progress and effectiveness of the strategy.

In line with the ALMA Chair's vision to increase participation of youth and harness Africa's demographic dividend, ALMA will establish a Youth Advisory Council to advise ALMA on how to ensure youth participation in advocacy for malaria and UHC at continental, regional and country levels.

The ALMA Youth Advisory Council will be working with existing youth leaders across the African continent and will champion youth engagement for malaria elimination including leading efforts to identify youth structures and initiatives appropriate for malaria and UHC advocacy and action.

Every two years, the Youth Advisory Council will produce an evaluation report assessing the success of the implementation of the strategy, and advising on improvements for all stakeholders.

8. ANNEXES

8.1. Terms of reference for the ALMA Youth Advisory Council

Introduction

In line with His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta's vision to establish an ALMA 'Youth Army' to increase participation of youth and harness Africa's demographic dividend in the fight against malaria, ALMA seeks to establish a Youth Advisory Council that will provide strategic guidance to Youth Army Activities.

Roles and responsibilites for the ALMA Youth Advisory Council

In line with the ALMA Youth Strategy and the ALMA Vision, the ALMA Youth Advisory Council will:

- Advise ALMA on how to ensure youth participation in advocacy for malaria at continental, regional and country levels.
- Serve as malaria and UHC ambassadors including through participation in key meetings, events and launches.
- Support Country Youth Armies' activities in promoting existing youth initiatives and in mainstreaming malaria and UHC in their existing agenda as well as engaging in existing malaria forums including national dialogues and forums.
- Provide guidance on implementation plans for country youth armies
- Participate in continental, regional and national youth coordination forums, meetings on malaria and UHC particularly those organized in collaboration with ALMA.
- Produce a biennial (every two years) assessment report on effectiveness of the ALMA youth strategy implementation and recommend improvements.

Selection criteria for the ALMA Youth Advisory Council appointment

- Youth from Africa or the diaspora aged between 15 and 35 years.
- Experience working with continental, regional and country stakeholders working in health, development or other related areas.
- Capacity to liaise with youth networks and passionate about finding solutions to health issues
- Basic knowledge of malaria and universal health coverage.
- Ability to work in a multi-cultural team and environment.
- Excellent communications skills, enthusiasm and energy.
- Available and willing to work voluntarily, attend ALMA Youth related planned meetings for the duration of the membership. (ALMA will cover the travel related costs)
- Team player who can work with various teams in ALMA, the African Union, and various partners.
- Fluency in English or French, other AU languages will be an added advantage.

Activities and reporting framework

The ALMA Youth Advisory Council shall submit an annual plan and will report on its implementation to the ALMA Chair via the Youth Task Force on quaterly basis.

Conditions of Service

This position will be part time and home-based until 2022. Membership of the ALMA Youth Advisory Council (AYAC) is voluntary and travel allowances and per diem will be provided for ALMA assigned missions based on ALMA policies. The conditions of service shall be governed by ALMA policies, rules and regulations.

8.2. Generic terms of reference for National Youth Armies

The National Youth Army will be engaged in diverse areas of action and accountability to support the existing end-malaria mechanisms at country level. This army will be involved in activities that strategically support the National Malaria Strategy and the programmatic action of the country's National Malaria Control Program. Its activities will be coordinated by the National Malaria Control Program and supported by the ALMA Youth Advisory Council.

Roles and responsibilites for the National Youth Armies

In line with the ALMA Youth Strategy and the ALMA vision, the ALMA National Youth Army primary role is to work with the National Malaria Control Programme (NMCP) to undertake the following duties:

- Advise the NMCP on how to ensure youth participation in advocacy for malaria and UHC at country level.
- Serve as malaria and UHC ambassadors in local government and existing youth groups at country level to mainstream malaria and UHC in their existing malaria strategic and implementation plan.
- Support NMCP in promoting malaria advocacy at country level.
- Participate in country youth coordination forums, meetings on malaria and UHC including all those jointly organized in collaboration with ALMA. As required, participate in meetings or workshops with the National Malaria Control programmes (including technical working groups) on scorecards, malaria dialogues, End Malaria Council and Funds meetings.
- Organize and facilitate sessions that highlight youth perspectives to end malaria and better access to UHC during key opportunities and meetings.
- Participate in national campaigns related to malaria and UHC.
- Participate in any other In-Country Youth Army activities as assigned by the responsible national coordination unit (e.g. the NMCPs and Youth Ministries responsible).

Selection criteria for the ALMA National Youth Army:

- Youth from country or the diaspora aged between 15 and 35 years.
- Ability to connect with country stakeholders working in the health sector and other related areas.
- Capacity to liaise with youth networks and passionate about finding solutions to health issues.
- Possess basic knowledge of malaria and universal health coverage.
- Able to work in a diverse, multicultural, multi-ethnic team and environment.
- Excellent communication skills, enthusiasm, energy, and a youthful spirit.
- Experience working with organizing youth; with country stakeholders working in health, development or other related areas.
- Willing to work voluntarily, attend ALMA Youth related meetings (ALMA will cover the travel related costs) for the duration of the membership.

Activities and reporting framework

The National Youth Army will report on a quarterly basis to the NMCP and will share plans annually with the ALMA Youth Advisory Council. The NMCPs will work with relevant National Youth Ministries and other relevant Ministries to oversee and coordinate the National Youth Army. Note that the incountry activities will be defined specifically depending on the country needs, and these terms of references are generic and for local adaptation.

Conditions of Service

Part time, home-based until 2022. Membership of the National Youth Army is voluntary and per diem and travel will be organized on ALMA assigned missions based on ALMA policies.

