



World Malaria Day 2018

“Ready to beat malaria”

26 MARCH 2018

KEY MESSAGES

URGENT ACTION IS REQUIRED TO GET THE GLOBAL FIGHT AGAINST MALARIA BACK ON TRACK.

That’s why WHO is calling for greater investment and expanded coverage of proven tools that prevent, diagnose and treat malaria:

○ WHO joins partner organizations in promoting this year’s World Malaria Day theme, “Ready to beat malaria”.

○ This theme underscores the collective energy and commitment of the global malaria community in uniting around the common goal of a world free of malaria.

- The global response to malaria is at a crossroads. After an unprecedented period of success in malaria control, progress has stalled.
- The current pace is insufficient to achieve the 2020 milestones of the WHO *Global Technical Strategy for Malaria 2016–2030* – specifically, targets calling for a 40% reduction in malaria case incidence and death rates.
- Countries with ongoing transmission are increasingly falling into one of two categories: those moving towards elimination and those with a high burden of the disease that have reported significant increases in malaria cases.

MALARIA BY NUMBERS: GLOBAL AND REGIONAL MALARIA BURDEN

- In 2016, there were 216 million cases of malaria in 91 countries, five million more than the 211 million cases reported in 2015. This marks a return to 2012 levels.
- Malaria continues to claim a significant number of lives: in 2016, 445 000 people died from malaria globally, compared to 446 000 estimated deaths in 2015.

- Children under five are particularly susceptible to malaria. The disease claims the life of a child every two minutes.
- Fifteen countries – all but one in sub-Saharan Africa – carry 80% of the global malaria burden.

Estimated malaria burden by WHO region in 2016

WHO REGION	MALARIA CASES	MALARIA DEATHS
African	194 million	407 000
Americas	875 000	650
Eastern Mediterranean	4.3 million	8200
South-East Asia	14.6 million	27 000
Western Pacific	1.6 million	3300
World	216 million	445 000

RENEWED FOCUS IN AFRICA NEEDED

- The African Region continues to bear 90% of malaria cases and 91% of malaria deaths worldwide.
- Nigeria, the continent's most populous country, accounted for 27% of malaria cases and 24% of malaria deaths globally in 2016.
- Supporting the most heavily-affected African countries will be critical to get the global malaria response back on track, as stressed by WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus in last year's *World malaria report*. Over the coming months, WHO will provide intensified support for countries that carry the highest burden of malaria.

FUNDING: CRITICAL TO BEATING BACK MALARIA

- Funding for malaria control and elimination efforts has levelled off since 2010, with US\$ 2.7 billion invested in malaria programmes globally in 2016. This amount represents less than half (41%) of the estimated US\$ 6.5 billion needed annually by 2020 in order to reach the 2030 global malaria targets.
- Insufficient funding at both domestic and international levels has resulted in major gaps in coverage of insecticide-treated nets, medicines and other critical life-saving tools.
- These gaps must urgently be closed. This is especially true for groups at a higher risk of contracting malaria, like mobile populations and people living in remote and hard-to-reach communities.

PROSPECTS FOR NEW INTERVENTIONS

- Boosting investments in the development and deployment of a new generation of malaria tools is key to achieving the 2030 global malaria targets.
- For vector control, new interventions that target outdoor-biting mosquitoes are being explored. New chemical formulations to mitigate the threat of insecticide resistance are under development, as are new strategies to improve the delivery of treated nets and indoor spraying.

Malaria vaccine RTS,S

- Later this year, the world's first malaria vaccine will be rolled out in selected areas of Ghana, Kenya and Malawi. RTS,S is the only vaccine, to date, to show partial protection against malaria among young children in large-scale clinical trials.
- This country-led programme will deliver the answers needed on a potential new tool that could be added to the existing WHO-recommended package of anti-malaria measures.

WIDENING THE ELIMINATION NET

- As highlighted in the most recent *World malaria report*, more countries are advancing towards elimination: in 2016, 44 countries had less than 10 000 cases of malaria, compared to 37 countries in 2010.
- Since 2010, seven countries have been certified malaria-free (Armenia, Maldives, Morocco, Kyrgyzstan, Sri Lanka, Turkmenistan and United Arab Emirates), and several others are inching closer to obtaining this status.
- In June 2018, WHO will convene its second annual "Global forum of malaria-eliminating countries". The forum will bring together representatives of 21 countries on the path to becoming malaria-free, providing a platform to share lessons learned and outline the concrete steps needed to drive cases down to zero.

WHO AT 70: SEVEN DECADES IN THE GLOBAL MALARIA FIGHT

- This year's World Malaria Day coincides with the start of a year-long series of activities to commemorate the 70th anniversary of WHO. The Global Malaria Programme will mark this special occasion with the publication of a series of malaria-focused interviews with leaders and advocates in the global response to malaria. The interviews will be published on 25 April on the WHO website.