

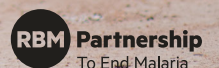
ZERO MALARIA

WORLD MALARIA REPORT 2022

RBM PARTNERSHIP TO END MALARIA KEY MESSAGING



PLEASE NOTE ALL MESSAGES ARE **STRICTLY EMBARGOED**
UNTIL 8TH DECEMBER 2022 AT 12:00 NOON CET





Malaria continues to be a threat for millions of people worldwide

The World Malaria Report 2022 confirms that malaria remains a deadly threat for millions of people worldwide. The efforts of teams across the globe and investments made to strengthen health systems have paid dividends. But the fight against malaria needs urgent action to get back on track to achieve WHO's key targets and milestones.

- 2020 and 2021 were challenging years for countries around the world.
 - The COVID-19 pandemic had an enormous impact on health systems worldwide and the malaria community faced rising biological threats at the same time.
- The latest World Malaria Report, released today, confirms countries' efforts and investments made have paid dividends.
- Thanks to efforts to fight the disease, an estimated 185 million malaria cases and 997,000 deaths were averted in 2021. Following a substantial rise in deaths during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of deaths in 2021 also did not increase further.
 - The 11 highest burden countries largely held the line. Since their identification as 'high burden to high impact' (HBHI) countries in 2018, all 11 have implemented dedicated activities enabling them to respond to the threat of malaria.
 - As we move into 2023, HBHI objectives will seek to further decrease the burden of malaria in these 11 countries, looking to decrease cases through vaccination, insecticide treated bed-nets and seasonal malaria chemoprevention, as well as scale up community case management.
 - Between 2000 and 2021, countries in the Greater Mekong Subregion (Cambodia, China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam) reported a 76.5% decrease in all indigenous malaria cases and a 94.1% decline in indigenous *P. falciparum* malaria cases.
- All of this was achieved thanks to countries' heroic efforts and strong partnerships despite the significant challenges that countries faced in 2021, including the ongoing pandemic and rising biological threats.
- Global malaria cases remained stable overall. There were 247 million cases in 2021, 2 million more cases than in 2020. This increase was at a slower rate than the rise between 2019 and 2020.
- However, the fight against malaria remains precarious – especially in Africa, where the malaria burden remains disproportionately high.
- Progress overall had stalled, even before the pandemic, and despite the efforts of the malaria community, the pandemic has only made things worse.
- Humanitarian crises, growing funding gaps, and a global economic downturn this year could further jeopardise what is already a precarious situation.
- The world must continue to work together to eradicate malaria.
- The RBM Partnership is calling on country leaders, donors and policy makers to increase their malaria efforts and get the fight against this disease back on track, or risk seeing cases and deaths substantially increase in the coming months and years.





A growing funding gap increases pressure in the fight against malaria

Financing the fight against malaria remains a significant challenge, particularly against the backdrop of insufficient funding secured through the Global Fund Replenishment, and the disproportionate fragility, instability and other complex challenges faced by low-income countries. Without a significant injection of funding, we will not be able to maintain the current global efforts to end malaria, protect our gains and make further progress.

- While the Global Fund's Seventh Replenishment raised record levels of funding this year, during challenging times, the world missed the US \$18 billion target needed to maintain malaria, HIV and tuberculosis programmes at current levels in the 94 countries it supports. While this was the largest amount ever raised in a Replenishment and a monumental achievement in a difficult economic environment, it is insufficient to end malaria.
 - If the Global Fund Replenishment had achieved its target of US\$18 billion, this would have enabled programmes to cut malaria cases by 66%, reduce malaria deaths by 62% and eliminate malaria in six additional countries by 2026.
 - For context, in 2021, the Global Fund:
 - Enabled testing of 280 million suspected malaria cases
 - Facilitated treatment of 148 million malaria cases
 - Provided 133 million mosquito nets to be distributed to protect families from malaria
 - The funding gap for malaria continues to widen. Total funding in 2021 was estimated at US\$ 3.5 billion, an increase from US\$ 3.3 billion in 2020. To reach global malaria targets, annual investments will need to triple by 2030 – to US\$10.3 billion per year.
 - Furthermore, growing threats to malaria control such as limited roll out of existing tools, decreased effectiveness of tests, emerging drug, insecticide, and diagnostic resistance, changing behaviour of mosquitoes, and the increased costs of procurement and delivery, mean the funding requirements to get back on track to achieve global malaria 2030 targets are now even higher than before.
- The spread of *Anopheles stephensi* is a particular challenge to disease control efforts in Africa due to its ability to thrive in urban settings and resist insecticides, making this species high risk.
 - If the fight against malaria remains underfunded, we could see the spread of malaria accelerate significantly. We must continue to protect the investments made to date through the maintenance and increase of current funding levels. Otherwise, the gains made in the last few decades can too easily be reversed.
 - Moving forward, endemic countries will need to be innovative in their utilisation of donor funding to maximise its impact.
 - Endemic country governments must look to solutions such as use of data, multisectoral action and innovative financing mechanisms, rather than relying solely on donor funding.
 - Investments to end malaria play a crucial role in helping countries continue to build resilient and sustainable health systems, strengthen country capacity to fight COVID-19 and prepare for future health threats.





The fight against malaria is at a precarious juncture

Experts agree that we can end malaria for good within a generation, but this is achievable only if we act urgently and decisively.

- Multiple countries have been making progress and even approaching elimination.
 - Since 2000, over 20 countries have reached the target of zero malaria cases, and other countries are close.
 - The World Malaria Report reveals that the number of malaria endemic countries with fewer than 1000 indigenous malaria cases increased from 33 in 2020 to 35 in 2021.
 - But a convergence of threats over the past few years (such as COVID-19, Ebola outbreaks, and other humanitarian emergencies) has contributed to disruptions in malaria services in several high-burden countries, undermining progress towards eliminating the disease.
 - Additionally, insecticide and antimalarial drug resistance are limiting the impact of the tools we already have available. Compounded with the lack of sufficient resources to roll out newer tools and technologies where they are needed, this presents a further challenge to ending malaria.
 - Other developments such as climate change will also have an impact; experts expect it to affect the geographical range, intensity and seasonality of diseases such as malaria.
- The threat of malaria now requires an urgent response.
 - 21 years after the Abuja Declaration, 4 years after the launch of HBHI and the various reflections on rethinking malaria, we must use the coming year to take stock of where we are and reinvigorate our malaria response.
 - The aim is that global, regional and national leadership align around a common vision, anchored in a commitment to leave no one behind, strengthen health systems and incentivize a multisectoral response. All of these elements are essential to get us back on track and contend with future risks, such as pandemics and climate change.
 - Working together, we can defeat the disease but only if we act quickly.
 - We will need to reach and engage with those in greatest need by strengthening the national health system using a PHC approach to deliver integrated quality services with financial protection. Continuing to scale up community case management will be essential in the highest burden countries.



KIGALI SUMMIT
ON MALARIA
AND NEGLECTED
TROPICAL DISEASES



Progress at risk in countries within reach of elimination

We may face some tough decisions going forward. In order to help countries with the highest burden, funding may need to be redirected from countries that were previously close to elimination, putting these hard won gains at risk. These are difficult decisions that we hope we don't have to make. Now is the time to step up.

- Last year, the World Health Organization's E-2025 report announced 25 countries and territories within reach of achieving zero malaria cases by 2025. This year's report reveals that 61.5% of reporting countries continued their progress towards elimination.
 - WHO's South-East Asia region also achieved its target of a 40% reduction in malaria case incidence between 2016-2020.
- Where endemic countries are coming close to reaching elimination status we must ensure they have every opportunity to achieve this goal.
- Strengthened regional coordination and scaling up disease surveillance will be pivotal to control malaria cases and eliminate the disease in countries that are within reach of this achievement.
- Following through with eliminating malaria in countries that are close is critical to continue shrinking the malaria map, and ultimately achieve a zero malaria world.



Investments to end malaria will advance gender and income equality

Malaria continues to have its heaviest toll on the world's poorest and most vulnerable people, particularly children and pregnant women in Africa. Advancements in the uptake of intermittent preventative treatment in pregnancy (IPTp), and greater focus on vaccinating children in Africa will prove crucial to strengthening the malaria response across the continent.

- Africa continues to hold a disproportionate burden of malaria. The WHO Africa region accounted for 95% of all global malaria cases and 96% of global deaths from the disease.
- The report also reveals that the WHO African Region is off track for the targets set in the Global Technical Strategy for malaria 2016-2030.
- However, data from the report shows that in 2021, about 35% of pregnant women received a full three-dose regimen of IPTp, compared to 32% in 2020.
- Seasonal malaria chemoprevention (SMC) continues to be a key method in the protection of children in Africa against malaria. In 2021 nearly 45 million children were treated, on average, per SMC cycle in 15 African countries, compared with 33.4 million in 2020.



Continued innovation will be key to eliminating malaria

Innovation remains essential to preventing rising malaria cases. The malaria parasite and mosquitoes that spread the disease are constantly evolving to resist even our most effective tools; therefore we must always stay one step ahead through investment in R&D. However, where we already have solutions available, we must first ensure that these are effectively distributed to endemic countries.

- Investments are needed to strengthen the health system so that all those in need can access and use effective and targeted malaria tools, tailored to local data, and receive quality health services in a primary care setting.
- Whilst the current tools are cost effective, investments are also needed to develop and scale up better tools and innovative solutions.
- Yesterday's innovations alone cannot defeat malaria, especially as we encounter new challenges such as insecticide and drug resistance, insufficient data, and the spread of new vectors such as the *Anopheles stephensi*.
- The current focus for malaria medicine R&D is on the development of life-saving medicines for pregnant women and children, a particularly vulnerable group to malaria.
- This year's report also identifies key opportunities within research and innovation in order to advance progress. These include the scaling up of Pyrethroid-PBO nets, continued ITN trials, new vector control products, vaccines in development, passive immunization with monoclonal antibodies in the area of chemoprevention and new diagnostic tests.
- Significant investments in R&D during the last several years have produced a robust pipeline of malaria interventions poised to transform the fight against malaria. Funding must continue to support innovation including new strategies to combat drug resistance, the roll out of new and improved nets, new vaccines and new anti-malaria medications.
- We can also accelerate progress by optimising and targeting all the effective tools we already have for maximum impact.
- With an enhanced and more resilient response both in malaria control and in addressing the risks we face, and the promise of R&D, we can get back on track and free the world of malaria.



