GLOBAL VECTOR CONTROL RESPONSE 2017–2030

World Health Organization

TDR For research on diseases of poverty
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Foreword

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
Director-General
World Health Organization

Technology and innovation have provided us with many advances which have improved the health of societies around the world. Yet daunting challenges remain, one of which is the growing burden and threat of vector-borne diseases to human health.

This risk is tied to the changing world we live in. On top of age-old problems, vectors that include mosquitoes, flies and bugs now have new opportunities to transmit infectious diseases. Rapid unplanned urbanization, climate and environmental change, and increased global travel and trade have stimulated the emergence or re-emergence of these diseases. Lack of reliable piped water and poor solid waste management create sites for mosquitoes to breed, which can facilitate explosive outbreaks as occurred with Zika virus disease in 2016 and urban yellow fever in 2015. The vectors are also developing resistance to insecticides and evolving new strains of pathogens.

Diseases such as malaria, dengue, leishmaniasis and lymphatic filariasis thrive in conditions of poverty and often exact their heaviest toll on the poorest. The economic and social burdens of these diseases on individuals, households and economies are tremendous.

One of the leadership priorities for WHO is to improve people's health outcomes and increase healthy life expectancy through prevention addressing social, economic and environmental factors. To do this, we need to elevate and strengthen vector control as a key public health service and integrate across other sectors such as water, sanitation and education. This requires careful evaluation and re-alignment of national programmes along with increased global financing, technical capacity, strengthened monitoring and surveillance systems and better use of interventions. We need new approaches that are sustainable. That means working together through effective partnerships with increased participation of communities and others such as private industry, to develop and apply solutions for vector control.

The Global vector control response utilizes science and innovation to bring positive change that we can measure and, most importantly, see and feel. It sets out the guidance needed to make vector control programmes effective, as well as acceptable and sustainable.

This new strategy was strongly supported by the World Health Assembly that elected me in May 2017. I am committed to supporting this ambitious global effort to save lives and avert suffering.

In the next two years, WHO will support the development and roll out of regional implementation plans as needed, and will support countries in updating and harmonizing their national vector-borne disease strategic plans. This response will require strong political leadership and expanded financing. This is a problem shared by all, so the solutions and support must come from all.

By working together, we can create a world in which no one is afflicted by deadly or debilitating vector-borne diseases. And this can only happen if we act with urgency and determination.