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Foreword



Dr Margaret Chan
Director-General
World Health Organization

This *World malaria report* is released in a milestone year: 2015 marks the end of the era of Millennium Development Goals and the dawn of a new global agenda for human health and prosperity, the Sustainable Development Goals. It is also the target year for malaria goals set by the World Health Assembly and other global institutions.

Against this backdrop, our report tracks a dramatic decline in the global malaria burden over 15 years. Target 6C of 2000 Millennium Development Goals called for halting and beginning to reverse the global incidence of malaria by 2015. The report shows – unquestionably – that this target has been achieved. Fifty-seven countries have reduced their malaria cases by 75%, in line with the World Health Assembly’s target for 2015.

For the first time since WHO began keeping score, the European Region is reporting zero indigenous cases of malaria. This is an extraordinary achievement that can only be maintained through continued political commitment and constant vigilance. The Region of the Americas and Western Pacific Region have also achieved substantial reductions in malaria cases.

The African Region continues to shoulder the heaviest malaria burden. However, here too we have seen impressive gains: since 2000, malaria mortality rates have fallen by 66% among all age groups, and by 71% among children under five.

Progress was made possible through the massive rollout of effective prevention and treatment tools. In sub-Saharan Africa, more than half of the population is now sleeping under insecticide-treated mosquito nets, compared to just 2% in 2000. A rapid expansion in diagnostic testing, and in the availability of antimalarial medicines, has allowed many more people to access timely and appropriate treatment.

Prevention and treatment efforts are saving millions of dollars in healthcare costs. New estimates in our report show that reductions in malaria cases in sub-Saharan Africa saved an estimated US \$900 million over 14 years. Mosquito nets contributed the largest savings, followed by artemisinin-based combination therapies and indoor residual spraying.

But our work is far from over. About 3.2 billion people remain at risk of malaria. In 2015 alone, there were an estimated 214 million new cases of malaria and 438 000 deaths. Millions of people are still not accessing the services they need to prevent and treat malaria.

Approximately 80% of malaria deaths are concentrated in just 15 countries, mainly in Africa. Taken together, these high-burden countries have achieved slower-than-average declines in malaria incidence and mortality. In most of these countries, weak health systems continue to impede progress.

To address these and other challenges, WHO has developed a *Global Technical Strategy for Malaria 2016-2030*. The strategy sets ambitious but achievable targets for 2030, including a reduction in global malaria incidence and mortality of at least 90%. Achieving these targets will require country leadership and a tripling of global investment for malaria.

We have arrived at a pivotal moment. Global progress in malaria control over the last 15 years is nothing short of remarkable. Let us not lose momentum. Together, we can transform the health, well-being and livelihood of millions of people across the globe.



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