

World Malaria Report 2024

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Context: The 2024 *World Malaria Report* released by WHO highlights **India's significant progress** in reducing malaria incidence and mortality.

Malaria Overview

About:

- Malaria is a **life-threatening disease** caused by *Plasmodium* parasites, transmitted through bites of infected female *Anopheles* mosquitoes.
- It is **preventable and curable**, commonly found in tropical regions.

Transmission:

- **Malaria is not contagious**; it spreads only through mosquito bites.
 - Among the five *Plasmodium* species infecting humans, ***Plasmodium falciparum*** and ***Plasmodium vivax*** are the most dangerous.
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Key Highlights of WHO's *World Malaria Report 2024*

Global Burden (2023):

- **Cases:** 263 million.
- **Deaths:** 597,000.
- **Africa's Share:** 95% of global deaths, primarily affecting young children and pregnant women.

Global Progress Since 2000:

- **Averted:** 2.2 billion cases and 12.7 million deaths.
- **Improvement:** Malaria incidence has dropped significantly in many regions.

Malaria-Free Certification:

- **44 countries and one territory** (e.g., Egypt) are certified malaria-free as of November 2024.
- Certification requires **three consecutive years of zero indigenous cases**.

- 25 countries now report **fewer than 10 cases annually**, compared to 4 in 2000.

Country-Specific Trends (2022-2023):

- **Decreases in Cases:** Nepal (-58.3%), **India (-9.6%)**, Bangladesh (-9.2%), Indonesia (-5.7%).
- **Increases in Cases:** North Korea (+47.9%), Thailand (+46.4%), Myanmar (+45.1%).
- **Zero Indigenous Cases:** Timor-Leste and Bhutan in 2023.

South-East Asia's Role in Reduction:

- The region contributed **only 1.5% of global cases in 2023**.
- Malaria cases dropped by **82.4% (2000-2023)**, and deaths by **82.9%**.
- **India and Indonesia accounted for 88% of malaria deaths** in the region.

Challenges

In Africa:

- Africa remains the most affected region, bearing the highest burden of malaria cases and deaths.

Funding and Systemic Issues:

- **2023 funding (\$4 billion)** fell short of the **\$8.3 billion target**.
- Gaps in essential resources such as **insecticide-treated nets, medicines, and surveillance tools** persist.
- Other barriers include **weak health systems, drug resistance, conflicts, and climate change**.

Recommendations:

- Strengthen **data systems**, ensuring disaggregated data by sex, age, and social factors.
- Promote **equity, gender equality, and community-driven innovations**.
- Prioritize investments and targeted interventions in high-burden areas.

India-Specific Achievements

Exiting HBHI Group:

- **India exited the High-Burden-High-Impact (HBHI) group** after reducing malaria cases by **69%** (6.4 million in 2017 to 2 million in 2023).
- Malaria deaths decreased by **68%** (11,100 to 3,500).

Key Strategies for Success:

- **Artemisinin-Based Combination Therapy (ACT):** A dual-action treatment targeting parasites.
- **Long-Lasting Insecticidal Nets (LLIN):** Widely used to block and kill mosquitoes.
- **Targeted Interventions:** Focused efforts in tribal and forested regions (e.g., Jharkhand,

Odisha, Chhattisgarh).

- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Regular assessments ensured effective implementation.
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Call to Action

WHO urges **increased investments, innovative solutions**, and **focused measures** to sustain progress, particularly in high-burden regions like Africa.



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