

World malaria report 2021



World Health
Organization

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ISBN 978-92-4-004049-6 (electronic version)

ISBN 978-92-4-004050-2 (print version)

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Suggested citation. World malaria report 2021. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2021. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.

Cataloguing-in-Publication (CIP) data. CIP data are available at <https://apps.who.int/iris>.

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Layout: Claude Cardot/designisgood.info

Cover design: Lushomo (Cape Town, South Africa)

Map production: WHO Global Malaria Programme and WHO Data, Analytics and Delivery for Impact team (DDI).

Please consult the WHO Global Malaria Programme website for the most up-to-date version of all documents (<https://www.who.int/teams/global-malaria-programme>).

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Foreword



Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
Director-General
World Health Organization

This year's *World malaria report* surveys the extent of damage wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic to the global malaria response, and outlines what is needed to get back on track and accelerate progress in the fight against one of our oldest and most deadly diseases.

There were an estimated 14 million more malaria cases and 47 000 more deaths in 2020 compared to 2019, due to disruptions to services during the pandemic. However, things could have been far worse if not for the efforts of malaria endemic countries to maintain services.

Even before the pandemic, global progress against malaria had levelled off, and countries with a high burden of the disease were losing ground. Since 2015, the baseline of WHO's global malaria strategy, 24 nations have registered *increases* in malaria mortality. Now, critical 2020 milestones of WHO's global malaria strategy have been missed, and without immediate and dramatic action, the 2030 targets will not be met.

Compounding the need for urgent action, this report also includes sobering new estimates of malaria's toll on children under 5 years of age in sub-Saharan Africa, where a vast majority of malaria deaths occur each year. Using better data and more accurate methodology, it suggests the disease has claimed many more young lives over the past two decades than previously reported.

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