



Global efforts to control and eliminate malaria, "the silent killer", have saved an estimated 3.3 million lives since 2000, reducing malaria mortality rates by nearly half globally and by 49% in Africa, according to the "[World malaria report 2013](#)" published by WHO.

The large majority of the 3.3 million lives saved between 2000 and 2012 were in the 10 countries with the highest malaria burden, and among children aged less than 5 years – the group most affected by the disease. Over the same period, malaria mortality rates in children in Africa were reduced by an estimated 54%.

The good news should of course be celebrated, but sustained funding is needed to lower the numbers even more, according to the [World Health Organisation](#). "This remarkable progress is no cause for complacency: absolute numbers of malaria cases and deaths are not going down as fast as they could,"

[said](#)

Margaret Chan, WHO Director-General.

Despite progress, figures show that universal access to prevention and treatment is still a long way off. An estimated 3.4 billion people are at risk for malaria, mostly in Africa where 80 per cent of the cases occur, and south-east Asia.

An estimated 207 million cases of malaria were reported last year resulting in 627,000 deaths.

“The fact that so many people are infected and dying from mosquito bites is one of the greatest tragedies of the 21st century,” Dr. Chan said.

[Interventions](#) to control mosquitos are slowing down, the agency said, noting that access to insecticide-treated bed nets was down for a second successive year due to a lack of funding.

“To win the fight against malaria, we must get the means to prevent and treat the disease to every family who needs it,” says Raymond Chambers, the Secretary General's Special Envoy for Financing the Health MDGs [Millennium Development Goals] and for Malaria.

International and domestic funding committed to malaria control topped at \$2.5 billion in 2012 – less than half of the \$5.1 billion needed annually to achieve universal access to interventions.

Progress in fighting malaria is also threatened by emerging parasite resistance to artemisinin, the core component of artemisinin-based combination therapies (ACTs), and mosquito resistance to insecticides, according to the report. Artemisinin resistance has been detected in four countries in south-east Asia, and insecticide resistance has been found in at least 64 countries.

“In the next 10-15 years, the world will need innovative tools and technologies, as well as new strategic approaches to sustain and accelerate progress,” said Robert Newman, Director of the WHO Global Malaria Programme, calling the gains against malaria “fragile.”

Last week, international partners to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria committed \$12 billion at its fourth replenishment meeting in Washington, DC.

The move “is testimony to the success of global partnership,” said Fatoumata Nafou-Traoré, Executive Director of the Roll Back Malaria Partnership urging adequate and predictable funding to fill the annual \$2.6 billion gap. “This is our historic opportunity to defeat malaria.”