



25 April 2015 – Today is World Malaria Day. This year, the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO) is calling for high-level commitment to the vision of a world free of malaria. The theme, set by the [Roll Back Malaria Partnership](#) (RBM), is *Invest in the future: Defeat malaria*

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This year's theme reflects the ambitious goals and targets set out in a draft post-2015 strategy to be presented to the World Health Assembly in May.

“As we celebrate World Malaria Day on April 25, we must recognize the urgent need to expand prevention measures and quality-assured diagnostic testing and treatment to reduce the human suffering caused by malaria,” says Dr Hiroki Nakatani, WHO Assistant Director-General for HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, Malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases.

## **Successes and challenges**

Huge gains in the fight against malaria have been made in recent years.

“Last year, the World Health Organization reported that the rate at which people are dying from malaria has fallen by almost half since the beginning of this century. One reason for this substantial improvement is the increased availability of insecticide-treated bed nets,” says UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in his message for World Malaria Day.

Mr Ban also hails the “massively improved access to accurate malaria diagnostics and effective treatment.”

However, despite this improvement, the disease still has a devastating impact on people’s health and livelihoods around the world, particularly in Africa, where it kills almost half a million children under 5 each year.

“We have the tools and the know-how. But, we still need to invest in getting these tools to a lot more people if we are to further reduce the number of people becoming ill with malaria, and further cut the number of people who die each year,” the Secretary-General asserts.

## **New WHO guidelines on treatment of malaria**

WHO is calling on the global health community to address major gaps in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of malaria, and is issuing updated malaria treatment guidelines.

On the occasion of this year’s World Malaria Day, WHO is releasing [the third edition of the Guidelines for the treatment of malaria](#)

These updated guidelines provide evidence-based recommendations on the diagnosis and treatment of uncomplicated and severe malaria, and on the use of medicines to prevent malaria in high-risk groups.

## **More information**

If you want to discover more about malaria – and what's being done to defeat it – do consult the WHO's [malaria factsheet](#) or the [following website](#) .

For more information on World Malaria Day 2015, you can also visit the event's [dedicated website](#) .