



Opportunities and actions for malaria endemic countries

The Lancet Commission on malaria eradication was convened in October 2017 to consider the feasibility, affordability, and merit of malaria eradication, to inform global opinion, and to identify priority actions for the achievement of eradication. The Commission's report—the first peer-reviewed academic document of its kind—synthesizes existing evidence with new analyses to demonstrate that malaria eradication can be achieved within a generation.

Bending the curve to create a purposefully-driven, engineered future of a world free of malaria by 2050 will require:

- » *improving malaria program management and implementation and making better use of existing tools, what we call the software of eradication*
- » *rolling out new tools, or the hardware of eradication*
- » *increasing financial investment in malaria elimination and eradication efforts.*

Success in these three areas will depend on strong leadership and the establishment of accountability mechanisms at all levels.

The Lancet Commission's call to action for malaria endemic countries

Improving eradication software



- » **Strengthen management capacity.** Improving the management of malaria programs through training is a high priority. National malaria programs have the opportunity to both offer and require management training, particularly for middle management and team leaders on the front line.
- » **Implement more nimble, data-driven programs.** Malaria eradication requires a management approach that is responsive to local circumstances and constantly adjusting in the light of new evidence and the availability of real-time data. National authorities can implement more nimble malaria programs by allowing greater flexibility in administrative procedures, enhancing managerial autonomy at the level of implementation, and supporting a learning-by-doing approach to find practical solutions to local operational problems.

- » **Use and share data in a timely manner.** The Commission anticipates a revolution in data collection, analysis, and use in the next decade, with profound impact on the effectiveness of program management. Data completeness and quality at the national level is already improving with the rollout of digital platforms and tools. However, data needs to be generated and shared more rapidly to strengthen coordination and collaboration at the regional level and to track global progress.
- » **Leverage the private sector.** The Commission identifies two opportunities for active engagement with the private sector that could improve service delivery and efficiency. The first is re-establishing the private market for long-lasting insecticide-treated nets, with close oversight and adequate public subsidies. The second is outsourcing services such as indoor residual spraying or malaria case management to private non-profit and for-profit organizations. Governments must also ensure correct diagnosis, treatment, and reporting of malaria by all public and private health care providers.
- » **Carefully manage financial transitions, integration, and decentralization.** The restructuring of health system financing, operations, and delivery are complex challenges that put countries at risk of resurgence and the loss of hard-won gains. If structural changes are managed carefully in a realistic implementation timeframe, positive outcomes from a responsive and sustainably-resourced health system may be anticipated.
- » **Actively align malaria eradication with broader health and development goals.** Malaria eradication contributes to the achievement of several of the Sustainable Development Goals – including reaching universal health coverage, promoting equity, and reducing poverty – and strengthens global health security. However, this will not occur passively. Deliberate efforts by national malaria programs are essential to ensure that investments in malaria promote broader health and development goals and vice-versa.

Rolling out new eradication hardware



» **Support new product availability.** Research, development, innovation, and the rapid deployment of new tools are essential for national and regional elimination and global eradication. Well before a new product becomes available, it is essential that countries consider the policy and operational implications, including regulatory pathways, use-scenarios, and financing options. It is also critical that drugs, insecticides, and other commodities are quality assured.



Increasing eradication finance

» **Spend more on malaria.** Data-driven management, better targeting, new tools, and leveraging private markets is expected to improve programmatic efficiency. However, the Commission estimates that total malaria spending still needs to increase by about US\$2 billion per year, with US\$1.5 billion coming from increased government malaria spending. An examination of plausible scenarios for increases in government spending for malaria will be required, especially in countries with high malaria burdens but minimal malaria spending.

Strengthening leadership and accountability



» **Drive the eradication agenda.** Heads of State can set a national vision and institutionalize a whole-of-government approach to malaria elimination, including diplomacy, fiscal policy, infrastructure, and trade—instruments that can be leveraged to accelerate malaria elimination and improve cross-border collaboration. In addition, empowering state and district leaders to respond to the technical, financial, and operational needs of malaria programs can have a positive impact on malaria elimination efforts.

» **Be accountable and demand accountability.** Committing to national and regional goals and associated accountability frameworks demonstrates a country's buy-in for elimination and global eradication. The Commission supports the creation of country-level malaria elimination task forces to mount a multi-sectoral response for malaria elimination, as well as subnational verification of elimination to recognize local success and prepare for national certification.

Malaria eradication is a goal of epic proportions. It represents the best of human ingenuity and requires an extraordinary level of trust and collaboration among all nations. It is this bigger vision that will propel and sustain us in the long and sometimes difficult road to a malaria-free world. Unambiguous and energetic commitment by national and subnational leaders in every endemic country is essential for achieving malaria eradication by 2050.

The full report, "Malaria eradication within a generation: ambitious, achievable, and necessary," was published by The Lancet on 8 September 2019, and can be found at www.thelancet.com/commissions/malaria-eradication.

More information about the Commission and the report is available at www.malariaeradicationcommission.com.

