



Opportunities and actions for the international community

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 the international community

Improving eradication software



- » **Develop more flexible procedures.** Eradication requires more nimble guidance on emerging issues and streamlined regulatory pathways for new commodities and tools. WHO can strengthen its critical role in setting global targets, updating technical strategies, and issuing normative guidance by being flexible and in tune with innovation and ambition coming from endemic countries on the front line.

- » **Support prevention of re-establishment.** Countries must develop effective strategies and financial plans for the prevention of re-establishment before they eliminate, but there is relatively little guidance available. WHO and other technical agencies should be proactive in developing guidelines for the prevention of re-establishment. Major funders should continue to co-finance prevention of re-establishment efforts in vulnerable settings.
- » **Encourage more frequent reporting and launch a global data hub.** Advances in information technology that facilitate faster collection, analysis, and use of data will have a profound impact on program management and effectiveness. Prompt and transparent reporting by countries should be encouraged by the Global Fund and the President's Malaria Initiative. The establishment of a global malaria data repository will be essential in the final stages of eradication.



Rolling out new eradication hardware

- » **Support research, development, and deployment of new tools.** Innovations and new tools are essential for malaria eradication by 2050. New tools will be especially valuable if they improve surveillance, counter drug and insecticide resistance, have long durations of efficacy, and do not require difficult or protracted compliance by individuals or households. Emphasis should be given to endgame tools that can reduce malaria burden in the highest transmission areas and/or prevent re-establishment where elimination has been achieved. Policy discussions must be initiated early across a broad set of stakeholders to clarify regulatory pathways, use-scenarios, and financing options to shorten the time between product launch and widespread use.

Increasing eradication finance



- » **Reconsider investment strategies.** Major contributors of development assistance for malaria need to carefully consider how they are allocating their resources and use modeling to determine what pattern of investment is most likely to lead to eradication in the shortest timeframe. These insights should guide a joint investment strategy by the Global Fund and the President's Malaria Initiative. In parallel, crucial investments in innovation and technology development must continue.
- » **Galvanize new donors.** The Commission recommends that development assistance for malaria increase by US\$0.5 billion per year and determines that new donors and smaller donors could readily do more. China's role in malaria internationally is growing, and there is opportunity for the country to be among the leading donors for malaria eradication. Wealthier countries in Asia, Europe, Middle East, and the Americas could also increase their support.
- » **Encourage greater domestic financing.** Development assistance will need to be accompanied by requirements and incentives to increase government malaria spending. The level of reasonable government malaria expenditure must be addressed country by country in the light of GDP growth, tax collection, overall public spend on the health sector, and the priority of malaria.
- » **Invest in global public goods and health system strengthening.** A proportion of resources from the major malaria funders should be directed at goals beyond supporting national malaria programs. Investments in program management, surveillance and reporting systems, combating the spread of drug and insecticide resistance, enhancing regional collaboration, and establishing emergency operations centers will strengthen health infrastructure and capacity for malaria elimination while supporting broader health and development goals.

Strengthening leadership and accountability



- » **Clarify roles and strengthen complementarity.** There is room for greater policy coordination and strategic alignment between the major global malaria organizations. The Global Fund and the President's Malaria Initiative should work together more closely on investment strategies, data sharing efforts, and domestic financing incentives. Endemic countries would benefit from a sharpening of focus and greater role clarity between the WHO and the RBM Partnership.
- » **Commit to eradication and develop a roadmap.** While eradication is achieved through elimination, country by country and region by region, a global commitment to eradicate by 2050 brings purpose and urgency and encourages investment and innovation. A global roadmap for eradication should be an aggregation of roadmaps developed by endemic countries and regions, delineating required progress in five-year intervals between now and 2050, and endorsed by the malaria community.
- » **Establish an independent monitoring board.** The Commission recommends that the End Malaria Council establish an Independent Monitoring Board for malaria eradication, modeled on the equivalent structure for polio, to hold countries, regions, and global malaria partners accountable to milestones along the eradication pathway and ensure continued progress.

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. The international malaria community must support countries and regional bodies in driving national and regional elimination until global eradication by 2050 is achieved.

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.

