



WEST AFRICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION
ORGANISATION OUEST AFRICAINE DE LA SANTE
ORGANIZAÇÃO OESTE AFRICANA DA SAÚDE

Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso, April 25, 2024

WAHO Statement on the Occasion of World Malaria Day 2024

Today, April 25, 2024, marks the 17th edition of World Malaria Day. The West African Health Organization (WAHO) joins its regional, continental and international partners to reaffirm its commitment to the elimination of malaria in the region of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

The ECOWAS region suffers a disproportionate burden of malaria. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the region accounts for 48% of malaria cases and 52% of malaria deaths worldwide, despite accounting for only 10% of the world's population at risk of malaria. There were an estimated 420 million people at risk of malaria, about 120 million cases of malaria, and 323,000 deaths in 2022. Malaria incidence and mortality rates have stagnated since 2019, despite various interventions. This situation is compounded by weak health systems, the challenges of climate change, growing resistance to insecticides, the threat of resistance to antimalarial drugs, political insecurity and the coexistence of other vector-borne diseases such as dengue fever, and chikungunya.

The burden of malaria is greatest for children under 5 (who accounted for approximately 80% of all malaria deaths in Africa in 2023), pregnant women and rural populations. Malaria impacts children's health, school attendance and economic productivity due to missed work days.

This year's commemoration of the World Malaria Day is under the theme "Accelerating the fight against malaria for a more equitable world". It highlights the need to intensify the fight for the elimination of malaria in malaria-endemic regions by reducing health inequalities in communities where there are people living in vulnerable situations. Malaria interventions urgently need to be supported and scaled up to achieve greater equity worldwide. This means increasing health coverage, particularly for those most at risk. Political and community



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commitments are needed to scale up interventions. We should take advantage of innovative interventions such as malaria vaccination and new generations of resistance-free insecticide-treated bed nets.

WAHO reiterates its commitment to supporting ECOWAS countries in their efforts to eliminate malaria. We are working with the recently established Regional Parliamentary Network for Malaria Elimination in the ECOWAS region (REPEL Malaria) to support parliamentarians in championing the cause of malaria. Parliamentarians from several ECOWAS countries have demonstrated their capacity to influence an increase in the budgetary allocation for malaria as well as to mobilize funds from the private sector.

WAHO calls for greater coordination, multi-sectoral collaboration, cross-border collaboration, increased national funding and scale-up of effective interventions such as vector control, preventive treatment and case management.

WAHO congratulates Cabo Verde on its certification of the elimination of malaria by the WHO on January 12, 2024. We encourage other countries to take inspiration from this country in achieving the objectives of eliminating malaria throughout the region.

On the occasion of the 17th World Malaria Day, WAHO thanks the ECOWAS Commission, ECOWAS Member States, the African Union, the African Leaders Alliance on Malaria (ALMA), the RBM Partnership for ending to malaria, WHO, UNICEF, bilateral and multilateral organizations, donors, NGOs, media, civil society, youth and communities for their support in the fight against malaria and its elimination in the region.

Let's strengthen our collaboration to accelerate the fight against malaria for greater equity in the world!