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JOINT UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME ON HIV/AIDS SETS NEW AIDS TARGETS, WHILE THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION CALLS FOR BETTER TARGETING OF MALARIA INTERVENTION

The World Health Organization (WHO) released the [World Malaria Report 2020: 20 years of global progress and challenges](#) on 30 November 2020. The report details progress made in the fight against malaria in the last two decades (between 2000 and 2019) and highlights progress against global malaria targets.

According to the report, the world has made great progress in the last two decades, although progress has plateaued in the last three years. More than 1.5 billion malaria cases and 7.6 million malaria-related deaths have been prevented since 2000. Even so, countries collectively reported more than 229 million malaria cases and 409 000 deaths in 2019.

Despite the progress made, the report notes that countries are collectively off track for the global targets. These targets include reducing new malaria cases and the mortality rate by at least 40 percent by 2020 and 90 percent by 2030 from a 2015 baseline. The report notes that, at the current trajectory, these targets for new malaria cases and deaths are off by 37 percent and 22 percent, respectively. COVID-19 is likely to further derail the achievement of these targets. The report also notes that resistance to malaria drugs and insecticides, and gaps in funding are some key issues affecting the malaria response. The report calls for better targeting of interventions, new tools, and increased funding to change the disease's global trajectory and reach internationally agreed targets.

Read the news release, the [WHO calls for reinvigorated action to fight malaria](#), which expands on the discussion.

New joint investment to help Lao People's Democratic Republic achieve universal health coverage

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis (TB) and Malaria, the World Bank and the Government of Australia have joined forces to support [Lao People's Democratic Republic \(PDR\)](#) to achieve universal health coverage by 2025. The three partners are making a joint investment totaling \$36 million to increase access to quality health care and strengthen health systems across Lao PDR. Of the total investment of \$36 million, \$23 million comes from the World Bank, \$10 million from the Global Fund, and \$3 million from the Government of Australia. Specifically, the funds will assist women and children, people living in hard-to-reach areas, and vulnerable and key populations to access essential health and nutrition services, including HIV and TB programs. Indeed, Lao PDR has one of the highest maternal mortality rates and chronic undernutrition among children in the Southeast Asia region, a high TB burden, and a concentrated HIV epidemic.

These funds will support programs implemented by the Ministry of Health and civil society organizations, beginning in January 2021.

UNAIDS World AIDS Day Report proposes new targets for 2025

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) published a report titled [Prevailing against pandemics by putting people at the centre](#) on 26 November 2020, ahead of World AIDS Day, celebrated on 1 December every year. The report reiterates that the world is off track for the global AIDS 2030 targets and proposes new 2025 targets to help countries get back on track. The new targets relate to the core combination of HIV services that have proven to be effective. These include HIV prevention, HIV testing, antiretroviral therapy, and viral suppression. For the first time, the targets also consider the role and importance of the societal and service enablers, including the legal and policy environment, and addressing stigma and discrimination.

The report has introduced 10-10-10 targets for removing societal and legal impediments to access to, or utilization of, HIV services. The 10-10-10 targets specifically mean that less than 10 percent of countries will have punitive legal and policy environments, less than 10 percent of people living with HIV (PLHIV), and key populations will experience stigma and discrimination, and less than 10 percent of women, girls and PLHIV, and key populations will experience gender inequality and violence. HIV services have six targets that relate to prevention, testing (for children and adults), treatment, and viral suppression.

According to the report, clear strategic direction, smart implementation, strong and sustained political commitment, and community engagement will be necessary for the achievement of these targets.

Further reading:

- [World Malaria Report 2020: 20 years of global progress and challenges](#)
- [The WHO calls for reinvigorated action to fight malaria](#)
- [Lao PDR aims to achieve universal health coverage with new Global Fund, Government of Australia and World Bank investment](#)
- [Prevailing against pandemics by putting people at the centre](#)

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