



25 APRIL 2017 – The WHO Regional Office for Africa [announced yesterday](#) that Ghana, Kenya, and Malawi will take part in a WHO-coordinated pilot implementation programme that will make the world's first malaria vaccine available in selected areas, beginning in 2018.

“The prospect of a malaria vaccine is great news. Information gathered in the pilot will help us make decisions on the wider use of this vaccine”, said Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa. “Combined with existing malaria interventions, such a vaccine would have the potential to save tens of thousands of lives in Africa.”

In sub-Saharan Africa, which shouldered 90% of the global malaria burden, more than 663 million cases have been averted since 2001. Insecticide-treated nets have had the greatest impact, accounting for an estimated 69% of cases prevented through control tools.

Together with diagnosis and treatment, WHO recommends a package of proven prevention approaches, including insecticide treated nets, spraying indoor walls with insecticides, and

preventive medicines for the most vulnerable groups: pregnant women, under-fives and infants. According to WHO's latest report, "[Malaria prevention works: Let's close the gap](#)," critical gaps in prevention coverage can be spotted, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. An estimated 43% of people at risk of malaria in the region were not protected by either a net or indoor insecticide spraying in 2015. Approximately 69% of pregnant women in 20 African countries did not have access to the recommended three or more doses of preventive treatment. Globally, nearly [half](#) of the world's population is at risk of malaria.

"Any death from malaria – a preventable and treatable disease – is simply unacceptable," said Dr Pedro Alonso, Director of WHO's Global Malaria Programme. "Today we are urging countries and partners to accelerate the pace of action, especially in low-income countries with a high malaria burden."

World Malaria Day falls in [World Immunization Week](#) 24-30 April which celebrates the widespread use of vaccines that protect people against 26 diseases. Overall, vaccines prevent an estimated 2-3 million deaths each year.

### Reductions in malaria case incidence and deaths (2010-2015)

WHO Region	Case incidence rate reduction	Mortality rate reduction
Europe	100%	100%
South-East Asia	54%	46%
Americas	31%	37%
Western Pacific	30%	58%
Africa	21%	31%
Eastern Mediterranean	11%	6%
Global	21%	29%