Here, *International Innovation* presents a summary of the information received from malaria-endemic countries to demonstrate the progress made towards reducing malaria incidence and mortality across the globe. *The World Health Organization’s World Malaria Report 2013* highlights some of the current challenges faced in the quest to control and eliminate malaria.

**FOLLOWING THE MILLENNIUM** Summit of the United Nations in 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were established to facilitate the tackling of some of the most significant health, social and economic problems affecting underdeveloped countries. As part of these MDGs, the participating member states and international organisations pledged to halt and reverse the incidence of malaria by 2015. Data collated for the most recent World Health Organization’s (WHO’s) World Malaria Report suggest that 59 out of 103 countries that were inflicted with malaria in 2000 are meeting the MDG target of reversing the incidence of malaria. The majority of these are on track to reduce incidence by 75 per cent by 2015.

A particularly crucial and significant finding emerging from worldwide data is that 69 per cent of the lives being saved by the increased use and effectiveness of malaria interventions occur where they are most needed – in the 10 countries that had the highest reported malaria burden in 2000. However, the widespread attainment of targets is currently being limited by insufficient international funding.

**FALLING SHORT OF FUNDING**

As a consequence of the MDGs, international and domestic funding for malaria has increased from pre-MDG levels of less than US $100 million in 2000 to $1.6 billion in 2011. However, this is still substantially less than the estimated $5.1 billion necessary to meet the targets of the MDGs with regards to malaria, and achieve universal access to interventions. In 2012, less than half of this is thought to have been given to support international malaria programmes. A continual increase in funding is vital for expanding intervention programmes and implementing more effective control mechanisms; the current shortfall is thought to be responsible for approximately 627,000 malaria deaths in 2012.

One of the key ways that funding has been used to reduce malaria mortality is through the provision of insecticide-treated mosquito nets to at-risk populations. Currently 88 countries – of which 39 are in Africa – distribute nets free of charge. An annual supply of at least 150 million nets is needed in sub-Saharan Africa alone to protect all individuals facing exposure to malaria. However, current data show that whilst between 2004 and 2010 the number of nets supplied by manufacturers to sub-Saharan Africa increased from 6 million to 145 million, this has since decreased to only 70 million in 2012. Consequently, it is estimated that only 36 per cent of the sub-Saharan African population sleeps under a net. This percentage is higher, however, among more vulnerable individuals such as pregnant women and children under the age of five – those most at risk.

**CHALLENGES OF MONITORING MALARIA**

The underdeveloped nature of the majority of countries that have a high malaria burden means that only 62 of the 103 with ongoing malaria transmission in 2000 have reported that a definitive analysis of malaria trends is sufficiently reliable, consistent and comprehensive. Unfortunately, the 41 countries in which the current malaria status is unclear are the ones that account for 80 per cent of estimated cases. This is generally due to the fact that, because of the significant malaria burden, their information systems are the weakest and they face greater challenges in accurately collating data for the vast number of malaria cases. Progress against malaria is more rapid in those countries with fewer cases and, as such, the 52 countries that are projected to decrease malaria incidence by 75 per cent by 2015 only account for 4 per cent of the total estimated 226 million cases in 2000.

Despite the massive burden that malaria places on the worst affected countries, the story is not all negative. The *World Malaria Report 2013* reports that 12 countries are now classified as being in the pre-elimination phase of malaria control and seven are in the elimination phase. Although there is still a long struggle ahead in those countries that are the most afflicted, if the intervention programmes that have been implemented since 2000 had not occurred, and death rates had remained unchanged, there would have been 500 million more cases of malaria and 3.3 million more deaths between 2001 and 2012. If adequate funding can be obtained, the data suggest that the battle against malaria can continue to be fought and lives can be saved.
2013, 97 countries had ongoing malaria transmission.

3.4 billion people were at risk of malaria worldwide.

In 2012 there were an estimated 207 million cases of malaria and 627,000 deaths, of which an estimated 483,000 were in children under the age of five.

**CURRENT STATE OF MALARIA**

- In 2013, 97 countries had ongoing malaria transmission.
- 3.4 billion people were at risk of malaria worldwide.

**IMPACT OF THE SCALE-UP OF MALARIA INTERVENTIONS IN THE YEAR 2000**

- Global incidence rate reduced by 29%.
- Global mortality rate reduced by 45%.
- Estimated 3.3 million lives saved, of which 90% are in the under-five age group.

**IMPACT BY YEAR**

- 70 million in 2012 (projected)
- 136 million in 2013
- 200 million in 2014

- An increase in the use and availability of rapid diagnostic tests:
  - 2012: 205 million
  - 2011: 88 million
  - 2010: 278 million

- Improved access to artemisinin-based combination therapies as the number of treatment courses procured by the public and private sectors rise:
  - 2010: 44%
  - 2012: 64% (37%)

- The proportion of global (and African) suspected malaria cases receiving a diagnostic test:
  - 2012: 64% (61%)

**SPECIAL FOCUS: MALARIA**

- INTERNATIONAL INNOVATION
In 2013, 97 countries had ongoing malaria transmission. 3.4 billion people were at risk of malaria worldwide. In 2012 there were an estimated 207 million cases of malaria and 627,000 deaths, of which an estimated 483,000 were in children under the age of five.

### IMPACT BY YEAR

**A resurgence in the number of long-lasting insecticidal nets delivered to endemic countries:**

- **2012:** 70 million
- **2013:** 136 million
- **2014:** 200 million (projected)

**Improved access to artemisinin-based combination therapies as the number of treatment courses procured by the public and private sectors rise:**

- **2010:** 44% (37%)
- **2012:** 64% (61%)

**The proportion of global (and African) suspected malaria cases receiving a diagnostic test:**

- **2010:** 44% (37%)
- **2012:** 64% (61%)

**An increase in the use and availability of rapid diagnostic tests:**

- **2010:** 88 million
- **2012:** 205 million