

Rwanda has significantly reduced the burden of Malaria, with the infection rate dropping from 409 cases per 1000 people in 2016 to just 76 cases per 1000 people in 2022.

Malaria deaths have also seen a remarkable decrease, falling by more than 89 percent over the same period.

For decades, malaria has been the leading cause of sickness and death in Rwanda, according to the World Health Organization.

Dr. Jean Louis Mangara Ndikumana, the director of Malaria prevention at Rwanda Biomedical Center (RBC), reports that the prevalence of malaria has now declined to 47 cases per 1,000 persons.

“Even though the disease remains a serious concern, only 51 people have succumbed to malaria in comparison to 71 last year and 264 in 2018,” he noted

“Uncomplicated cases have dropped from 3.9 million to less than a million between 2018 and 2022, while severe malaria cases decreased from 7,054 to 1,831 people during the same period,” Ndikumana added.



Dr. Jean Louis Mangara Ndikumana, the director of Malaria prevention at RBC talking to journalists

Rwanda witnessed an upsurge in malaria cases, peaking at 403 cases per 1,000 persons between 2012 and 2017. This followed a successful fight against the disease when the country had reduced malaria incidence by an impressive 86 percent between 2005 and 2011.

RBC reveals that the decline in malaria prevalence is the result of concerted efforts by the government in collaboration with WHO and other partners. These efforts have expanded and decentralized malaria control initiatives, encompassing public education, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment.

Dr. Ndikumana attributes this regression to the tireless work of health services, in partnership with decentralized authorities, and the crucial role played by community health workers.

Rwanda has implemented a comprehensive and highly effective malaria prevention

and response program, achieving one of the fastest-recorded decelerations in malaria transmission.

Alphonsine Mukakarangwa, a farmer residing near a wetland in Bugesera District, attests that malaria is no longer her primary concern. She credits measures such as indoor spraying and the use of mosquito nets.

This mother of five ensures that her family sleeps under a mosquito net every night, and they haven't experienced malaria cases in a long while.

Through RBC, several control measures have been executed, including the distribution of mosquito nets, Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS), the use of drones to apply anti-malaria pesticides, and early treatment of sickness.

At the community-village level, Community Health Workers have been indispensable in Rwanda's efforts to combat the disease.

Presently, 55 percent of all malaria cases are treated at the community level by these dedicated health workers, who are equipped to conduct tests and provide treatment, thus preventing severe cases.

Health experts emphasize that eradicating the disease requires strict adherence to measures such as sleeping under mosquito nets, clearing nearby ponds and bushes, seeking early treatment, and utilizing the services of community health workers. These combined efforts have brought Rwanda closer to winning the battle against malaria.