

Climate change should not affect near elimination of malaria

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Credit: CDC

Some good news in the face of climate change has emerged from health economists: a study into the health economics of combatting malaria in countries nearing elimination has shown that climate change will not have too great an effect and should not dissuade health organisations from continuing to scale- up their current elimination methods.

Investigators Paul Parham and Dyfrig Hughes conducted the first health economic research paper to question the possible effects of climate change on the cost-effectiveness of combatting mosquito-borne diseases in certain countries in Africa where the disease is nearing elimination (Climate influences on the cost-effectiveness of vector-based interventions against malaria in elimination scenarios, Paul E Parham Dyfrig A Hughes *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B* 16.2.15). Their analysis of current methods of household spraying and use of impregnated mosquito nets, which included modelled changes in climate conditions, found that the effects of climate change on current methods against mosquitoes are likely to be negligible.

Dr Paul Parham, author and co-editor of a special issue of the journal *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B* which features the work, and past member of Bangor University's Centre for Health Economics and Medicines Evaluation, said:

"Given the many challenges that [climate change](#) poses to some of the world's poorer countries, and the health challenges already faced by countries currently affected by vector-borne diseases, we were interested in whether [health economics](#) could offer some guidance for future-planning.

This paper takes a first step in providing those charged with developing health policies in some specific countries, with some evidence on which to base their response planning. Our results of the scenarios considered should give policy-makers the confidence to continue the good work currently being carried out, as our models suggest that continuing to scale up the same actions should still lead to elimination."

Professor Dyfrig Hughes, Co-director of the Centre for Health Economics & Medicine Evaluation commented:

"Given that [malaria](#) and other vector-borne diseases already cause one million deaths and a further million people made ill by their effects, it is vital that health economists prepare the ground-work so that health agencies know how best to respond to changing climates and circumstances.

We were able to look at certain parameters to conclude that the change would not be sufficiently significant to call for a move from current practices of reducing contact between adult mosquitoes and humans to eliminate the disease."

More information: The special issue is available online:
rstb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/370/1665

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