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## Study: Malaria funding still less than half of needs

**PARIS:** Funding for malaria has risen sharply over the past three years but still has to double to meet needs, according to a study published online yesterday by *The Lancet*.

Global financing has risen by 166 percent since 2007, from US\$730 million to around US\$1.94 billion, it said.

• But this is around 40 percent of the US\$4.9 billion that is needed for comprehensive control of malaria in 2010, it said.

The good news is that 21 countries, including 12 in Africa, have now received adequate, or near-adequate assistance.

The study, headed by Bob Snow, a professor at the Centre for Geographic Medicine at Oxford University, comes ahead of a meeting in New York on Tuesday of donors to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Several hundred million cases of malaria occur each year, of which around 850,000 are fatal.

The study highlights the

disparities among 93 countries where malaria is endemic.

China and India, as well as two African countries, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon, have economies that are strong enough to support malaria programmes by themselves, it says.

Whether international donors should support these countries' needs should be debated, it says.

In contrast, there are 10 African countries and five in Asia that are short of funds and low in domestic income.

"Poor countries with inadequate donor assistance and large sectors of their population at risk of malaria must remain in the focus of attention if global ambitions for malaria control are to be realised," said Snow.

Under the Millennium Development Goals, reviewed in New York last week, UN members pledged to "have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases."

-AFP