



WHO's Framework for Kala Azar

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Due to the growing health threat of [visceral leishmaniasis \(VL\) \(Kala-azar\)](#), the [World Health Organisation \(WHO\)](#) has launched a **new framework** to help **eradicate** the disease in **eastern Africa**.

- The framework outlines **five main strategies** for guiding VL elimination:
 - Early diagnosis and treatment
 - Integrated vector management
 - Effective surveillance
 - Advocacy, social mobilisation and partnership-building
 - Implementation and operational research
- **Visceral leishmaniasis** is a slow-progressing indigenous disease caused by a protozoan parasite of the genus *Leishmania*.
 - It spreads through the bite of **infected female sandflies** and can prove to be deadly if not treated timely.
 - VL leads to fever, weight loss, and enlargement of the spleen and liver.
 - It is **endemic to 80 countries**, however, In 2022, eastern Africa accounted for 73% of global VL caseload, 50% of which occurred in children aged under 15 years.
 - In 2023, **Bangladesh** became the **first country** in the world to eradicate VL.
 - In India, [Leishmania donovani](#) is the **only parasite** causing this disease.
 - Recently, India has also successfully achieved its target to eliminate visceral leishmaniasis (initial target year was 2010, but it was extended until 2023).

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