



## 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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