According to new research published in the Lancet, the number of people in the world with high blood pressure reached 1.13 billion, nearly doubling since 1975.

The largest ever study of its kind, the research involved the World Health Organization and hundreds of scientists throughout the world, and incorporated blood pressure measurements from nearly 20 million people.

High blood pressure is no longer a disease of affluent countries. Today, the worst affected countries are those in sub-Saharan Africa – the same countries that continue to battle high child and maternal mortality, as well as HIV/AIDS

This study highlights the increasing importance of noncommunicable diseases and their risk factors. As child mortality and fertility have fallen rapidly in recent decades, the proportion of older people has increased and the burden of noncommunicable diseases that affect older people have also increased.

Blood pressure is a leading risk factor for cardiovascular diseases such as heart attacks and strokes, and it is treatable. Health systems in less wealthy countries must adapt to diagnose and control blood pressure so that adults may live longer and healthier lives.

TheÂÂ full reportÂÂ is available here:

http://who.int/cardiovascular_diseases/publications/high-blood-pressure/en/