



COLOMBIA

August 2023



More than 25 million people are at risk of dengue, which is half of Colombia's population. A number of large-scale outbreaks have occurred in recent years. The number of Zika cases also increased rapidly following a global outbreak of the mosquito-borne disease in 2015.

In May 2015, the community of Paris, in the Bello neighbourhood, welcomed the country's first release of *Wolbachia* mosquitoes. This marked the first step towards establishing *Wolbachia* in the mosquito population and reducing the local transmission of mosquito-borne diseases.

A large-scale research trial is now underway in Bello and Medellín. As well as measuring the impact of *Wolbachia* on the transmission

of mosquito-borne diseases, this research is expected to demonstrate a significant reduction in the number of new cases of dengue, Zika and chikungunya.

Recently, three new cities have joined this initiative in Colombia: Cali in the Cauca Valley; and Itagüí in the Aburrá Valley.

In 2019, when the last epidemic peak was recorded, Cali reported around 15,000 cases of dengue, which accounted for about 15% of the total cases reported throughout Colombia. Cali has also been affected by the most recent outbreaks of Zika. In 2016, more than 15,000 cases of Zika were reported in the city.

	Project start	Community engagement	Release phase
Medellín	2016	2016	2017
Bello	2012	2014	2015 and 2017
Cali	2018	2019	2020

4
project sites

size of the project
160 km²

4,020,000
target population

2100
supporting groups, companies and institutions

PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE
measured by survey
93.5% Bello (Paris)
90% Bello (municipality)
97% Medellín

13,336
volunteers who released mosquitoes

168
project staff

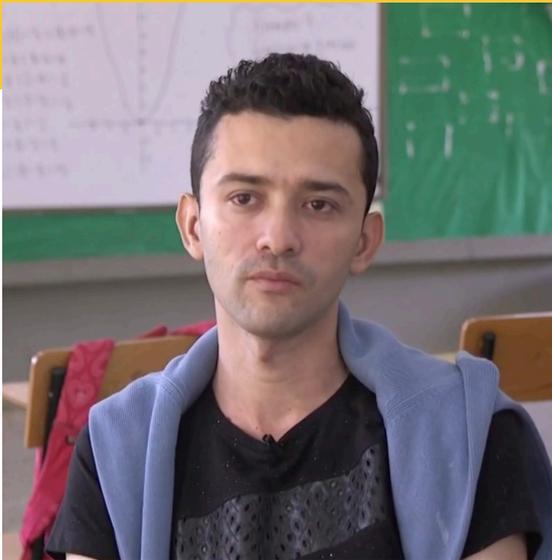
MOSQUITO-BORNE DISEASE BURDEN IN COLOMBIA

Colombia has recorded a marked increase in suspected Dengue cases since 2014 and a notable upswing in 2019. Around 20% of the total cases reported in Colombia in 2016 came from Cali, where 15,000 cases of Zika were also reported.

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She was sneezing and there was a stream of blood coming from her nose. She was coughing blood. No one knows how much I suffered looking at my daughter in bed, she was so unwell, pale and very thin. The World Mosquito Program is very important to me and it is excellent!

- Dora Carvajal Perez
Medellin community member and mother of Asly



Hector’s story

Hector Álvarez is a school teacher in Bello, Colombia. He is helping to raise awareness about the World Mosquito Program in his community.

As a social science teacher, Hector is fascinated by the World Mosquito Program’s Public Acceptance Model, which is used to inform and educate the public about the *Wolbachia* method.

Hector caught dengue in 2013 and had a high fever, so he has first-hand knowledge and experience of the disease. When he felt like he was choking, he had to be seen quickly by nurses and doctors. He tasted blood in all his food, and lost a lot of weight.

The World Mosquito Program is working with partners and communities in Colombia across Bello, Medellin and Cali, to protect people from the suffering caused by mosquito-borne diseases, such as dengue, Zika, chikungunya and yellow fever.

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This program has really caught my attention. I became really interested in the Public Acceptance Model which works to educate and inform the public about the program. Where I can, I share information about the project and recommend that people learn about it as a way to combat this public health problem.

With the help of dedicated people like Hector, we will be able to achieve our vision of a world free from mosquito-borne diseases.

Partners and supporters



Further information:

Alex Jackson
Global Editorial and Media Relations Manager
alex.jackson@worldmosquito.org

About us

The World Mosquito Program (WMP) is a not-for-profit group of companies owned by Monash University that works to protect the global community from mosquito-borne diseases. The World Mosquito Program uses naturally occurring bacteria called *Wolbachia* to reduce the ability of mosquitoes to transmit viruses to humans.

Following decades of research and successful field trial results, the World Mosquito Program is currently partnering with communities in 14 countries around the world to implement our ground-breaking

solution. We have staff working in countries across Oceania, Asia, Europe, and the Americas, and offices established in Australia, Vietnam, France and Panama.

Our approach has widespread support from communities, governments, research institutes and philanthropic partners around the world. Through collaboration and innovation, we are making a difference to millions of lives.

A collaboration between:



Contact us

