

# MEXICO

September 2020



In Mexico, mosquito-borne diseases are a growing threat to local communities. We are using our self-sustaining solution to introduce naturally occurring *Wolbachia* bacteria to mosquito populations in Mexico.

Following the signing of the project agreement in June 2017 between Monash University and Baja California Sur Health Secretariat, the project engaged with the community to explain how the *Wolbachia* method works to prevent mosquito-borne diseases.

In March 2018, the World Mosquito Program established a partnership

with the government health authorities in Baja California Sur to establish Mexico's first project in La Paz. Local and national government officials are supporting the project, hoping it can offer a long-term, sustainable alternative to current disease-control approaches.

Beginning in January 2019, *Wolbachia*-carrying mosquitoes were released in two pilot areas in La Paz. Mexico is the first country in North America to collaborate with the World Mosquito Program. City-wide releases began in February 2020.



1

project site



size of the project  
**49 km<sup>2</sup>**



**211,890**  
target population



**200,000+**  
people reached by  
public engagement

**PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE**  
measured by survey  
**92% La Paz**



**84**  
project staff



**5,300**  
volunteers who  
released mosquitoes

**5**  
local partners  
and supporters



## MOSQUITO- BORNE DISEASE BURDEN IN MEXICO

A series of large-scale dengue outbreaks have occurred in Mexico in recent years, and infection rates are expected to increase by 40 per cent over the next 50 years. Similarly, the number of Zika cases increased rapidly after a worldwide outbreak of mosquito-borne disease in 2015. Dengue represents a significant health burden for communities like La Paz.

During 2013 and 2014, Baja California Sur experienced a dengue epidemic, with 8090 confirmed cases. For that period, La Paz had the highest number of confirmed cases in Mexico.

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There have been many cases of diseases transmitted by mosquitoes and I don't want this to happen anymore. My children mentioned the success of this program in other places and we decided to support it.

- Francisca Osuna Mayoral  
Community container host



## Communities in Mexico embrace the *Wolbachia* method

Mosquito-borne diseases cause significant financial pressure on families as people who fall ill are unable to work or attend school, and relatives often need to take time off to care for them. On a global scale, research has identified that families cope with 45 per cent of the total cost of dengue – caring for an affected member can triple monthly household expenses.

In the past, communities have suffered from dengue outbreaks in La Paz and other parts of Mexico. This is what drives the World Mosquito Program to work there. With the first phase of releases in La Paz, more than 1800 community members showed their support by volunteering to host 'Zancu KITS'.

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My grandchildren are always at the house, and I don't want them to get sick with dengue. This is a benefit for all the family and we will be more protected.

Mario Espinoza,  
Zancu KIT host

### Partners and supporters



BILL & MELINDA  
GATES foundation



BAJA CALIFORNIA SUR  
SECRETARIA DE SALUD

Alumbra *innovations*  
Foundation

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Citizens of Baja California Sur have joined us in one of our many events, listened or read about the *Wolbachia* method, shown an interest with their questions and comments and hosted Zancu KITS in their patios, gardens or trees.

## About us

The World Mosquito Program is an international, not-for-profit initiative that works to protect the global community from mosquito-borne diseases including dengue, Zika, chikungunya and yellow fever.

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

Currently the World Mosquito Program works in 11 countries in Asia, the Pacific and the Americas. Our aim is to protect 75-100 million people over the next five years.

In addition to the Oceania Office in Melbourne, Australia, the World Mosquito Program has a regional Asian Hub in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam and plans for an Americas Hub in Panama City, Panama.

These hubs support projects in their respective regions and contribute to core global operations.

### Contact us

