

SRI LANKA



December 2019



The World Mosquito Program has partnered with the Sri Lankan Government to bring our *Wolbachia* method to local communities in Colombo.

In July 2017, the World Mosquito Program established a research partnership with the Sri Lankan Ministry of Health, Nutrition and Indigenous Medicine to examine new, more effective ways to protect communities from mosquito-borne diseases. Our project in Sri Lanka is being established in the Colombo area, with the first mosquito releases to take place in 2020.

Supported by the Australian Government, the primary goal of this project is to pilot the implementation of our *Wolbachia* method in Sri Lanka. If successful, it could serve as a model for future large-scale implementation as a low-cost and self-sustaining method for the prevention of mosquito-borne diseases such as dengue, Zika, chikungunya and yellow fever.



1
project site



size of the project
19.44 km²



218,866
target population



21
project staff

PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE

After conducting laboratory studies to examine the impact of *Wolbachia* on dengue and chikungunya viruses in Sri Lanka, we are now engaging with the community to explain our *Wolbachia* method in order to gain community acceptance.

If the community engagement phase is successful and we gain public acceptance in 2019, we will release *Wolbachia*-carrying mosquitoes in 2020.



3440
volunteers
who released
mosquitoes

2
local partners
and supporters



MOSQUITO-BORNE DISEASE BURDEN IN SRI LANKA

With 25,000 cases reported in the first 6 months of 2019, the Sri Lankan dengue epidemic has emerged as a serious public health concern.

“

Dengue has become a major problem in Sri Lanka. I found out that the dengue epidemic can be eradicated using the *Wolbachia* method so I feel surprised and happy. I hope this method will be successful in our country.

KP Buddika Priyadarshan Wimalasekarai
Principal Stingers Preschool, Sri Lanka



Suhail's story

At home in Colombo, 23-year-old Suhail knows a lot more about dengue now that nearly everyone in his family has had the mosquito-borne disease. He used to think that dengue was just a fever that comes and goes, to be treated with paracetamol, but now he knows that it can be life-threatening. Suhail's family treats dengue very seriously since one of his sisters passed away when she was just 9 months old after contracting the worst serotype of the disease. Suhail's father was working in Abu Dhabi and couldn't make it home in time. It was the first time Suhail had ever seen his dad cry.

“

We take this issue very seriously; it is very important to us. We have to communicate at meetings and in schools and workplaces, and to people who might live in isolated communities in the mountains. It's for the good of the whole community for people to be healthy.

normal mosquito and one that's carrying dengue.”

Now whenever anyone in the family gets a fever, they get a blood test straight away – Suhail says that the first thing that comes into his head is “what if it is dengue?” When he gets bitten by a mosquito, he thinks: “What if that's a dengue mosquito? You can't tell the difference between a

“If the *Wolbachia* method can reduce the threat of dengue, we can sleep peacefully, we won't have to worry so much about losing our loved ones.”

Partners and supporters



Media contact

Dale Amtsberg
Senior Media Advisor
dale.amtsberg@worldmosquito.org

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.

Currently the World Mosquito Program works in 12 countries in Asia, the Pacific and the Americas. Our ambition is to protect 100 million people by 2023.

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

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.

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.

Contact us

