

# FIJI

March 2020

The World Mosquito Program has partnered with the Fiji Government to bring our *Wolbachia* method to local communities in Suva and the Central corridor, and Lautoka and Nadi in the Western Division.

Funded by the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and NZAID, and in partnership with the Fiji Government Ministry of Health and Medical Services and Live and Learn Environmental Education, the program began in November 2017.

Since then the program has engaged with communities, received endorsement from

the Community Reference Groups, released adult *Wolbachia* mosquitoes on the ground and from unmanned aerial vehicles (thanks to WeRobotics, Pacific Flying Labs Fiji, Fiji Drone Services and USAID) and were supported by Rotary.

The Ministry of Health and Medical Services has agreed to continue long-term monitoring of the local mosquito populations to provide information about the level of protection provided by the *Wolbachia* method.



|                                   | Project start | Community engagement | Release phase | Ongoing monitoring |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| <b>Suva (Central)</b>             | Nov 2017      | Apr 2018             | 2018          | from 2019          |
| <b>Lautoka and Nadi (Western)</b> | Jan 2019      | Apr 2019             | 2019          | from 2019          |

**3**  
project sites

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

**272,916**  
target population

**35**  
project staff

**4158**  
people attended  
community events

**5258**  
total number of  
volunteers

**PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE**  
measured by survey  
**98%** Suva  
**96%** Lautoka  
**97%** Nadi

**3440**  
volunteers  
who released  
mosquitoes

**838**  
volunteers hosted  
BG traps

**1340**  
school participants  
in our *Wolbachia*  
Warriors program

## MOSQUITO-BORNE DISEASE BURDEN IN FIJI

Dengue outbreaks of varying magnitude have been documented in Fiji since 1971.

Large epidemics of different serotypes occurred in 1997-98 and 2013-14, with small sporadic outbreaks in between.

Since 2014, the incidence of dengue in Fiji has remained high and there have been regular smaller outbreaks.

Chikungunya and Zika have been reported sporadically since 2015.

“

I think about all the initiatives we're used to, like spraying and clean-up campaigns. While these are good, the World Mosquito Program's work is a big step towards a more sustainable and environmentally friendly approach to combating mosquito-borne diseases like dengue.

- Evisake Wainiqolo, Central Division Community Reference Group



### Turaga ni Koro Joji Satala's story

One of the responsibilities of Joji Satala, Turaga ni Koro of Namoli Village, is to communicate about anything to do with community development, including the World Mosquito Program's *Wolbachia* method.

He made sure World Mosquito Program staff participated in village meetings and larger communal meetings attended by village chiefs across the Western Division.

Most Fijians already know the symptoms of dengue fever – how it feels and how it spreads. Joji remembers an outbreak of dengue fever in the Lautoka and Nadi areas, with mostly children affected. More recently, there were a couple of cases in the tourism hub of Nadi.

“

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.

This made him think “we have to work hard and we have to work fast – this is happening now.”

Joji thinks that the impact of the *Wolbachia* method will be massive in Fiji and across the world.

#### Partners and supporters



#### Media Contact

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Releases have been completed. Monitoring is ongoing, with results expected in 2020. Public health impact will be evaluated from mid-2020, 12 months after completion of releases in Suva, using routine disease surveillance data.

## 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 ambition is to protect 100 million people by 2023.

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

