The World Mosquito Program’s self-sustaining method uses safe, natural bacteria called *Wolbachia* to reduce the ability of mosquitoes to transmit viruses between people. Since long-term monitoring has shown *Wolbachia* has become self-sustaining at high levels in northern Queensland, dengue is no longer a public health concern.

With strong community support and government approval, we have been working in dengue-prone areas across northern and far northern Queensland since 2011, including large parts of the Cairns and Townsville regions. The cornerstone of our approach is community engagement, with tens of thousands of Queenslanders supporting our projects.

We are continuing to monitor *Wolbachia* levels in the local mosquito populations across Townsville, Charters Towers, Douglas Shire, Cairns and the Cassowary Coast.

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**PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE**

measured by survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Acceptance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cairns</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassowary Coast</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas Shire</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charters Towers</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townsville</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our dedicated team is working hard to monitor and support the projects in northern Australia from our Oceania hub.

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**MOSQUITO- BORNE DISEASE BURDEN IN AUSTRALIA**

Research in Australia is helping us to refine our approach and adapt it for use internationally. Our project in Townsville was the first to show that *Wolbachia* could be deployed at a city-wide scale through community mosquito releases, with no local dengue transmission after four rainy seasons.

Monash/WMP used reasonable efforts to confirm this data was up-to-date at the time of publication. Please email contact@worldmosquito.org for our most recent data.
Far North Queensland is now essentially a dengue-free area for the first time in well over 100 years.

- Dr Richard Gair
  Director and Public Health Physician,
  Tropical Public Health Services, Cairns

“...It's made a very big difference in this area," says Ruben. "I know there haven't been any dengue fever reports in I think the last 5 years, so that's pretty crazy. Cairns without dengue means it's a safe place – people are not getting sick from dengue fever and they're not going to be scared about visiting."

Young Wolbachia warriors

Cairns students Charlotte and Ruben are proud of the role they played in the World Mosquito Program’s Wolbachia-carrying mosquito releases. At first, they were curious to see how and why the program works and the science behind it. Then they both decided to get involved when they realised what this meant for anyone who had experienced dengue fever.

“We brought home a box from school and placed it in our backyard and then we filled it up with water,” Charlotte explains. “When the adult Wolbachia mosquitoes emerged, they flew away. I checked it and there were larvae and the next time I checked it they were gone.”

Through the WMP’s Wolbachia Warriors program, students find out about the safe and natural Wolbachia method, make their own observations and host mosquito release containers at home.

Parents, teachers and children can participate in citizen science and feel like they are helping their communities be happier and healthier.